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The life and Times  
of  
Robert Emmet

a lecture delivered in  
~~connection~~ with the  
St Peter's Catholic Young  
Men's Society

by  
George H. Kirkley  
on

Monday 16<sup>th</sup> Oct 1869





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THE LIFE AND TIMES OF ROBERT EMMET

A LECTURE

DEIVERED IN CONNECTION WITH ST. PETER'S CATHOLIC  
YOUNG MEN'S SOCIETY,

BY GEORGE HARLEY KIRK, Esq.

(From the Drogheda Argus, Saturday, Oct 16, 1869)

On Monday, Oct 16th, the opening lecture of the winter session, of this admirable society, was delivered by George Harley Kirk, Esq., Clogher Head. The opening of another session finds the society hale, vigorous, and prosperous. The fact speaks volumes for the energy and ability which has directed its affairs. To the beloved spiritual director, Father M'Kee, the position which the society maintains, whose interest he has influentially directed, watched over, and fostered with every pulse of his Irish heart in its cause, must be a matter of great pride. To Mr Christopher Tighe, and Mr Peter Johnson, president and secretary of the society, and whose untiring exertions in connection with it, it has often been our pleasing duty to notice, the continued prosperity—and may it long continue—which marks the existence of the society must be also more than pleasurable. The time for commencing the winter session having arrived, a deputation from the society waited, a few weeks since, on Mr Kirk to request that he would give a series of lectures; Mr Kirk kindly acceded to their wish, and on Monday evening a delighted audience listened to the first lecture—or oration in the series. It was not the first time that Mr Kirk had lectured for the society; any of those lectures would be sufficient to establish his fame as a highly accomplished and eloquent occupant of the rostrum. Poet, patriot, and *literateur*, much was expected of his lecture on Monday evening, speaking on a subject—Robert Emmet—sure to evoke all his powers. Suffice it to say that the lecture fulfilled the high expectancy of the auditory. The repeated plaudits with which its eloquent and telling passages were received, showed how successfully Mr Kirk spoke to the intellect and patriotism of his hearers. The lecture came off in the Mayoralty Room. A very respectable and full audience attended. The entrance of Mr Kirk, and of the clergymen amongst the auditory, was received with rounds of applause. Amongst those present were—Edward M'Donough, Esq. (Mayor); Very Rev Thomas Mathews, PP, St Mary's; Rev Thomas Gavin, CC, do; Rev Henry

M'Kee, CC, St Peter's ; Rev F Doyle, OSA ; Rev Mr Glynn, OSA ; Rev Mr O'Byrne, OSA ; Mr Thomas Daly, Mrs Daly, Miss Cronin, the Misses Kirk, Miss Grey, Miss Courtney, Mr Thomas Connolly, Mr Leech, HC ; Mrs Leech, Mr Killeen, Town Clerk ; Rev Brother Larkin, Superior Christian Brothers ; Rev Brothers O'Donnell, O'Malley, Michael Cullen, TC ; G Butterly, sub ; Jas A Clarke, Thos Clarke, Dublin ; R J F ; J Costello, ARGUS ; Rev T Bannon, CC, d ; Rev J Gallogly, CC, Tullyallen ; John Glynn, TC ; John J Gormley TC ; Mr James M'Kenn ; Mr J A Flanagan, TC ; Mr R Kirk, Newgrange ; Mr J T Simpson, Solicitor, &c., &c.

At eight o'clock, the Rev Henry M'Kee, spiritual director of the society, took the chair, amidst loud cheers.

The Chairman, on coming forward on the platform to introduce Mr Kirk, was received with volleys of applause. He said that it gave him sincere pleasure to announce that the winter session of their society opened under circumstances as favourable as any during the previous years of its long and prosperous career (loud cheers). He was delighted to have the duty of telling them that the inaugural lecture for the session would be delivered by Mr Harley Kirk (loud cheers). Mr Kirk is a gentleman of high intellectual gifts, he has made his mark in the literary world, and a better selection of a lecturer could not possibly be made (cheers). A learned author has said that not to know the events of the past was always to be a child. Mr Kirk, who is not only a poet but an historical student of much research in the lore of his country had kindly consented to deliver a series of lectures for them (cheers). Everyone should learn the history of nations, especially that of his own land (applause). Mr Kirk's lecture would treat upon an epoch round which the deepest interest of Irishmen will ever centre. It was a matter of congratulation that they had not to go elsewhere to procure a lecturer ; they had him here, at their own door, an able one. On former occasions also they were indebted to Mr Kirk for his kindness in coming forward to lecture for them. After a few further observations the Chairman concluded amidst applause.

Mr Kirk then came forward at the rostrum and was greeted with loud applause. He said :—

Reverend Chairman, ladies and gentlemen—In once more coming before the public, at the warm solicitations of my young friends, the members of this invaluable society, I have endeavoured, knowing their love of the old land which gave them birth, and the deep interest which they take in her traditions, antiquities, and history, to select the biography of one of her highest



stars in the firmament of intellectual grandeur and moral worth; one of her most sterling, disinterested, and truest sons in patriotism; one of her bravest and most exalted children, although one of the most unfortunate. I am perfectly aware, that, to do this subject, which I have selected for this evening, full justice, would require an adept in oratory with the heart of patriot. Though I am far from having any pretensions to the one, yet, I imagine what I feel, the other beat proudly within my breast as if in bold response; so, without pleading further excuse for appearing before you this evening, I will enter on my subject, by quoting these lines of Pope:—

“Who noble ends by noble means obtains,  
Or falling, smiles in exile or in chains,  
Like good Aurelius, let him reign, or bleed,  
Like Socrates, that man is great indeed.”

But this truth is far from being always adopted or looked upon in the light it is set off in by the poet. Let a man be noble, brave, virtuous, and endowed with a brilliant intellect, let him work with a philanthropic spirit for the good of humanity, and let him throw himself heart and soul into a noble cause, and risk his honour, his fortune, his life, and even his fame in the undertaking and if it fails—the vulgar, who would have carried him on their shoulders in proud ovation, if fortunate, are the first to censure and wrongly interpret his zeal. But there are others, whom we would expect more from, who equally malign and misrepresent these noble specimens of humanity; but, we think, they began too soon their nomenclature—rash monomaniacs! incorrigible fool! Other times, and other men, when the cloud of rank prejudice is lost in the absorbing space of time will do justice to their memories; when the names of their persecutors are either forgotten, or remembered, only to be held up to odium (applause). But noble minds, even if in the opposing ranks are never carried away thus by prejudice, they can freely give the patriot or enthusiast his meed, and can laud his integrity and virtues while they oppose him for his principles or condemn him for his rashness—they can admire him as a man, while they condemn him as a rebel—for their thoughts are moulded in the words of Young—

If nothing more than purpose in thy power,  
Thy purpose firm, is equal to the deed,  
Who does the best his circumstance allows.  
Does well, acts nobly; angles could no more.

The subject of our lecture, to night, is one of those noble characters, whose purpose was firm to the last although fate proved unpropitious, and who won, nevertheless, the unchanging hearts of the lowly and unlettered of his country and whose name in every Irish cabin has become a household word (cheers). Sixty five of Ireland's most sluggish and darkest years of captivity have rolled heavily by since, upon a bright morning in the month of September, vast crowds were seen hastening to one of those theatres of mock trial, which adorned, not unfrequently, our cities, in those dark days of bloodshed. This farce, the chief scene of which was previously arranged at the Castle, was to be enacted in Green street court house, and thither the multitude was seen bending its course. When the court sat, the first impulse of the spectators was to cast their eyes with abhorrence on that scorpion impersonation of satan, Lord Norbury; from him they wandered to the virulent and rancourous Plunkett; but turning from that sycophant lawyer, who, like crown lawyers in general, of whom it has been remarked, they have at all times been of the bloodhound tribe, seldom losing scent of their prey either from considerations of gratitude or humanity, their eyes wandering from this sycophantic lawyer, were at last riveted on a noble youthful form placed at the bar, standing, though with unbroken spirit, like a felon in the dock (cheers). The crowd hear with burning brains and beating hearts the many accusations brought forward, all tending to prove only that he loved his country too well (applause). They are all unanswered, for he allows no one to defend him, loving his native land so much, needed no defence (hear, hear). But the sentence of his condemnation being passed, that legal humbug of the ermined rascals of that day, the Clerk of the Crown asked the prisoner, as usual, had he anything to say. It was then that the youthful martyr, like a demigod, standing forward in the dock in front of the bench, bearded those who dared to call themselves countrymen while they thirsted for the sacrifice (loud applause). Then it was that his thrilling oratory, like a thunderbolt, burst upon those miserable representatives of the law, and while it partly awoke their slumbering consciences, and startled them in the midst of their power, paralysed every expression but that of shame. But the surpassing eloquence of that dying speech, which was delivered in a firm, clear voice, loud enough to be heard distinctly at the outer doors of the Court House, was to work a different effect upon the crowd. The ringing sweetness of the accents and cadences of that charming voice were, thought after life to come ringing like a wreath of vocal pearls through the brightest vistas of their recollections; and those

words of fire, which they heard delivered by the young patriot martyr, were to be deeply engraved on their hearts, from which an impression was to be taken by those of their children. Yes, that brilliant speech was to be delivered as an heir-loom to their posterity (applause). But he asked one request on his premature departure from this world, that was the "charity of its silence," until his dearly beloved country should be ranked amongst the nations of the globe (loud applause). This solemn appeal has not in the literal sense been acceded to. Certainly his tomb remains uninscribed; no man has dared to write his epitaph, for the time has not yet come, but the time has come when those who knew his motives can dare to vindicate them, and no longer could they be suffered to rest in obscurity and peace (hear, hear). "Let my memory," he says, "be left in oblivion," but Irishmen would be base born slaves if they suffered his memory to sleep in the shade. No! that memory is not alone cherished in his own loved Island of Tears, but it has gone forth over the blue expansive waters of the wide Atlantic; we find it treasured in the wildest savannas and most interminable prairies of the New World, and in *La Belle France* it has gone forth from the press, under the auspices of feminine beauty, rank, and that undying love of patriotism and liberty so congenial to the French character. Yes, that memory could not be allowed to remain in oblivion by his countrymen at home while it was so much honoured abroad; while it was venerated in America as that of a martyr; the sign post not unfrequently to be met with there was the figure of that noble specimen of humanity trampling upon the crown of England (applause). We find that upon the banners of that free land, during the time of elections, his portrait fluttered in the breeze beside those of Washington, Jackson, and Franklin; as the *Nation* says, "Even now his speech is learned by heart in the schools. It is the gospel of rebellion against England." Then, how could Ireland forget her martyr's memory, whose love and devotedness to her most exalted principles were sealed with his blood? How could Ireland forget the brave, vanquished, though yet echoing to the march of the triumphal victor? Could she allow that sacred memory to rest in oblivion while it was echoed in the loud pæans of other lands? Could Ireland forget that name—that character—and let it rest in obscurity while prejudice and ignorance aspersed it (cries of "no, no.") She might as well try to forget the wrongs of seven hundred years; she might as well look upon the cicatrices of her former wounds, and forget the chains of slavery that made them (loud applause). No, Ireland could never let his memory rest in oblivion, she could not give him



that silence which he craved, for her heart was his, and her tongue and her pen can now do justice, though she is still unfreed, to his principles and the misfortunes which crushed him. With this plea for bringing the character and principles of our illustrious countryman before you, before I enter into a concise sketch of his life, I must bring to your recollections the stormy days which immediately preceded his coming on the political arena of his country, those dark days, from a long act of tyranny, and a long night of bondage, which at last burst into the nearly successful rebellion of 1798. And where is the Irishman

Who fears to speak of Ninety-eight ?

Who blushes at the name ?

When cowards mock the patriots fate,

Who hangs his head for shame ?

\* \* \* \* \*

All—all are gone—but still lives on

The fame of those who died—

All true men, like you, men

Remember them with pride.

(Applause). Even those who look upon the outbreak of '98 as an insurrection to be condemned in principle, must admit that the provocations Irishmen received were a full justification of the course which they pursued; as it is said, "the English have never endeavoured to excuse their conduct in Ireland. They say very little about it, and when they speak they do so with great reserve. Indeed, on their Irish policy silence is wisdom. By an instinct dictated as much by policy as by any generous sentiment of honour they cast a veil over the faults of their countrymen." The iron grasp of England was never relaxed upon Ireland—she was as an incubus pressed upon her, or as a vampire eternally sucking the life-blood from her veins—she crushed every attempt at her prosperity in the embryo—she ignored the rights of her people, and their creed was recognised but to be an instrument of her greater persecution—her children were denied the use of letters in order to make them a more easily enchained race. Her policy consisted of making them the most servile and cringing slaves, and he who sought with honest pride for a higher order in the human family, received for his praiseworthy aspirations but death or extermination (loud applause). Thus did Ireland writhe under the barbarous rule of England. But she reared up and pampered within her own bosom, if possible, a poisonous brood, more blood-thirsty and cruel than those imported from England. The yeomen and their leaders having the framers of the laws on their side (the viper Castlereagh, who, in the

true and bitter words of Byron, "cut his country's throat and then his own," and his compeers. O! shade of Cromwell! of whom we might say, as Von Ranke says of Cæsar Borgia, that they were virtuosos in crime!) scourged the people with impunity in the most barbarous and heartrending way ever devised by even the most refined in cruelty. The laws which were enforced during this reign of terror were nothing new to Ireland, a few of which, by the way of example, will not, perhaps, be foreign to our purpose. Not only were the Catholics excluded from all offices, civil and political, but they were forbidden to carry arms for personal defence, and he who attacked and plundered a Catholic (carrying arms) on the highway was not liable to any punishment. By virtue of the law, whoever laid information against a Catholic immediately got possession of his fortune: Catholic parents were forbidden to educate their children; the son by abjuring his father's faith immediately acquired his father's fortune. Catholics were forbidden to purchase or inherit lands, &c; &c.—According to a solemn declaration of the Lord Chancellor, in 1769, the very existence of a great majority of the people was not recognised by the law, and depended only on the caprice of the government. Noble, generous, and high minded Protestants, and Presbyterians, indignant at the hateful iniquities practiced upon their Catholic brethren, were the first to embark in the cause of liberty and to strike for freedom (loud applause). Amongst those who enrolled themselves with Lord Edward Fitzgerald and Wolfe Tone—(cheers)—in this noble cause, was the brother of our hero, Thomas Addis Emmet; but fate proving unkind, on the issue of their attempt, scarcely one of these unsuccessful leaders but came to (by England), a supposed ignominious end on the scaffold. Emmet, after a long imprisonment, more fortunate than the majority of his colleagues escaped to America (hear, and cheers), there to shine for many years a bright ornament of the American bar (cheers). Though the rebellion of Ninety Eight was crushed—though its active fires were extinguished—yet the embers smouldered, were still glowing, and only required to be fanned until the flames should burst out afresh. Robert Emmet who was very young did not join his brother Thomas Addis and follow the fortunes of the insurgents of that time, but pursued his studies with the greatest success in Trinity College, and while he surmounted the highest obstacles in the mazy paths of learning, he acquired an unquenchable love of liberty, the most implacable hatred of England, and the most praiseworthy ambition of serving at a future period the interests of his country (cheers). His family were conspirators, linked with



the destiny of their country, and his eager spirit caught very early the principles of his brother. When he was but fifteen, he was present at some meeting held at his father's house by the United Irish Association ; where he heard Tone expound his principles and devise his plans, for the redemption of his native land, and whose daring spirit and eloquent tongue we are told, won the soul, and affected the heart of the young enthusiast (cheers). That love of liberty, and that firmness of character, which for a time seemed to hold an influence over a nation's destiny, could be traced very distinctly while he was yet a boy (cheers). An anecdote has been recorded, which shows his perseverance and endurance under pain, and his presence of mind in the moment of danger even at a very tender age. Being a lover of chemistry, he amused himself frequently at his father's house by making experiments in this science. Here is a characteristic anecdote :—After one of these boyish essays in the art, when a friend who had been aiding him, had retired, he sat down to solve an intricate problem in algebra. While wholly absorbed in the difficult task, he chanced to put his fingers to his mouth, some corrosive sublimate being upon them, he unconsciously, while biting his nails, received some of the poison into his mouth, a circumstance which nearly caused his death. Upon being seized with excruciating pains, he became fully aware of the immediate danger to his life. But his first impulse was not as we would suppose to alarm the household. No, he went to his library, and deliberately taking down an encyclopædia, looked for the article 'poisons', and having found that chalk was recommended as an antidote against the poison which he had swallowed, he went to the coach house where he had seen his friend Mr Patten using chalk, and having broken open the door, made use of the chalk as directed (applause): One would think he had quite enough study for that evening, but quite the contrary, he determined to solve the question, which the author acknowledged to be a very difficult one ; so having regained his study, he commenced his labour again, though under severe tortures, and never relaxed in his efforts until he had gained the solution. Our hero was born in Molesworth street, Dublin, in the year 1778. He was the youngest son of Dr Robert Emmet who was a leading practitioner of that city. This gentleman was descended from a highly respectable family, natives of the county Cork. Soon after his marriage with Miss Elizabeth Temple, (who was descended from the celebrated Sir William Temple) he removed to Dublin in 1760. Robert, who was much younger than his other two



brothers, was sent at a very early age to school, to Oswald's, in Dopping's Court, off Golden Lane ; where it is likely he imbibed a taste for the severer studies of the exact sciences, as this school was renowned in those days for mathematics. From this school he was sent to Samuel White of Grafton street, and some time afterwards, to the Rev Mr Lewis of Camden street, and ultimately he became a student of Trinity College, at the early age of fifteen, in the year 1793, where he continued an undergraduate, distinguishing himself by his noble nature, brilliant genius, and transcendent powers of oratory, until in the spring of 1798, along with some other students, he was summarily driven from the university on account of his political tendencies. There had been an historical and debating society formed in the College in the year 1770, at which Curran, Grattan, and many other transcendent orators first essayed their powers. To this society our young hero was admitted a member, and it was during these debates, that the splendour of his attainments and the eloquence of his speech made themselves apparent (applause): Those who heard him speak at these meetings bear testimony, that, man never was gifted with a more rare and fascinating eloquence than he ; even the day he made his debut, in this debating society, he proved that he possessed a remarkable and first rate order of talents (applause). The subject started was, " Is a complete freedom of discussion essential to the well being of a good and virtuous Government." Modern politics being forbidden by the rules of the society, this subject was handled by young Emmet in his maiden speech, in the most clever and masterly manner, he being on the liberal side, of course ; and he kept within the bounds prescribed by the society most adroitly, while he expounded his case in the most vivid manner. All his arguments were replied to at considerable length, by a student named Lefroy, who was afterwards judge. On the conclusion of Lefroy's reply, Emmet rose, and in a speech which must have been unpremeditated, displayed his brilliant powers of discussion, reasoning, and extempore oratory, in neutralizing the objections of his opponent ; the only part of which preserved being the finish. " If Government," he says " were vicious enough to put down the freedom of discussion it would be the duty of the people to deliberate on the errors of their rulers, to consider well the wrongs they inflicted, and what the right course would be for their subjects to take ; and having done so, it then would be their duty to draw practical conclusions." Grace must have been a natural gift of Emmet's as well as eloquence, for Macartney, who preserved the conclusion of this first speech of his, says that although he preserved the

substance it was impossible to portray his grace or animation (applause). Many tributes have been paid to this great man's genius and oratory. Grattan says, that his eloquence was truly surprising, and Mr Burrows has often said, that he never met a man, in any part of the world, endowed with such transcendent eloquence; and Madden tells us, though he has spoken to many on this subject who have heard the voice of the young orator many times in this society, many of whom were of high Tory principles, yet, that the same meed was bestowed on the oratorical powers of the young patriot martyr (applause). "The powers of Emmet's eloquence," says Moore, "was wonderful, and I feel at this moment as if his language was still sounding in my ears." A writer in the London and Dublin magazine says, "during these harangues, (in the debating society), Emmet's fine manly countenance glowed with an enthusiastic ardour, and he delivered himself with as much animated fervour as if he were addressing a numerous but distracted assembly which he wished to persuade. His words flowed with a graceful fluency, and he combined his arguments with all the ease of a man accustomed to abstract discussion." The Government feared so much the influence of his oratory, even while yet a student in Trinity College, that there was a lawyer, famed at the bar for his cleverness, sent to overwhelm his reasoning and to repair the breaches made in the loyalty of those around him. But it was not in eloquence alone that he shone during those school boy days. Moore, who was his fellow student and frequently his companion, speaks of his many admirable and noble qualities in the warmest terms. 'Were I to number, indeed, the men among all I have ever known, who appeared to me to combine in the greatest degree pure moral worth, with intellectual power, I should among the highest of the few, place Robert Emmet, wholly free from the follies and frailties of youth—though how capable he was of the most devoted passions, events afterwards proved. The pursuit of science, in which he eminently distinguished himself, seemed at this time the only object that at all divided his thoughts, with that enthusiasm for Irish freedom; which in him, was an hereditary as well as a national feeling; himself being the second martyr his father had given to the cause (applause). Simple in all his habits, and with a repose of look and manner indicating but little movement within, it was only when the spring was touched, that set his feelings, and through them, his intellect in motion, that he at all rose above the level of ordinary men.' Possessed of the noblest of arts and all the rare qualities which adorn and mark a truly great man, Emmet on attaining his twentieth year, in the Spring of 1798, found himself the



centre of a circle of ardent and patriotic youths, whose 'souls he held in his hands in a University where the genius and aristocracy of Ireland were supposed to be moulded to the interests of England.' But his stay was now to be of short duration in Trinity College, 'the chief ornament' as Moore calls him 'of the popular party.' In the month of February, in this year, he was expelled by the Lord Chancellor during his visitation there; being charged along with some others, of not being burdened with too great a stock of loyalty to the Crown. He had written a letter to the board which received the approbation of his father before enclosing it, asking to have his name struck off the list of students; at the same time condemning their mode of endeavouring to receive on oath, information from the students respecting any of their associates who might chance to be implicated in the United Irishman's Society; but before this letter reached its destination, it is said, his name was struck off the College roll. Although Moore thought that there was very little doubt of Emmet's being while at College a United Irishman, yet we have no tangible proof of his being at that time a member of the society; in fact it is not known the exact time when he became one. We find him now entering society and becoming a visitor of one of Ireland's greatest ornaments in patriotism, this was Lord Cloncurry, who treated him with the greatest kindness and who has thus spoken of him afterwards in his memoirs. 'I little thought when I saw at my house that intelligent, enthusiastic, and animated lad, that, six years afterwards, he would organise a new insurrection, and in punishment for his imprudence, lay his head on the scaffold.' There was another of Ireland's brilliant ornaments whom he now became acquainted with, and he became a constant visitor at the country seat of this most gifted of men. in wit and oratory. His dwelling was constantly filled with the literati in every department, and he was the brilliant sun around whom this eminent society moved, like planets lit up by the vivid and lucid flashes of his wit and humour, this talented original was John Philpot Curran (applause). Though young Emmet, like others, was at first attracted by the singular genius, love of home, and straightforward character of this great man; yet, very soon there sprung up another attraction for the young patriot, far superior to any that had ever before come in his way. She who was to be linked with his destiny through life—she alone who was to share his heart with his country—she who was to prove the bright star of his existence—his dream of the future, had now for the first time crossed his path. This young girl, who made such an impression on the heart and on the mind of Robert, was

the daughter of Curran, and hardly attained her eighteenth year. Their intimacy soon ripened into a passionate and ardent love, which became mutual, and that reciprocal affection tried by the severest ordeal was, alas ! too soon proved to be deep and lasting (applause). When Curran noticed the close intimacy which was springing up between Emmet and his daughter, not liking Robert for a son-in-law, not from any objection to the man, for he had the highest opinion of him, and used to say, "I would have depended more on his word than on the oath of another man" But he feared a connection with the scion of a rebellious family as dangerous, and wished to escape being linked with one whom he thought too enthusiastic in the cause of freedom, so far so, as to be likely to bring him to the scaffold. These considerations induced Curran to treat Robert coldly, in order that he might give up the idea of his daughter. But ah ! he little knew how far the undying affection of the deepest love had penetrated the innermost recesses of the souls of these young people. But the sequel must be told, to show to what extent this love existed and how far the father was deceived in his calculations. Robert Emmet had written some pieces of poetry shortly after he left College. One of these pieces, not deficient in poetic harmony and deep pathos, shows those feelings which actuated him at a later period, to endeavour to throw off the yoke of tyranny. These lines he calls 'Arbour Hill,' this place was a spot marked by many executions in those troublesome times, and the victims massacred there were buried close by in a waste piece of ground called 'croppies hole,' a receptacle also for rubbish. Influenced by deep feelings at such outrages perpetrated by the Tyrant, the young patriot begins thus :—

No rising column marks the spot,  
Where many a victim lies,  
But oh ! the blood which here has streamed,  
To heaven for justice cries.

It claims it on the oppressor's head,  
Who joys in human woe,  
Who drinks the tears by misery shed,  
And mocks them as they flow.

It claims it on the callous judge,  
Whose hands in blood are dyed,  
Who arms injustice with the sword,  
The balance throws aside.

Oh ! sacred justice, free this land  
From tyranny abhorred ;  
Resume thy balance and thy seat,  
Resume—but sheath the sword :

It claims it for his ruined Isle,  
 Her wretched children's grave ;  
 Where withered freedom drops her head,  
 And man exists—a slave.

No retribution should we seek—  
 Too long has horror reigned ;  
 By mercy marked may freedom rise ;  
 By cruelty unstained.

Nor shall a tyrant's ashes mix  
 With those our martyred dead ;  
 This is the place where Erin's sons,  
 In Erin's cause have bled.

And those who here are laid at rest,  
 Oh ! hallowed be each name ;  
 Their memories are for ever blest—  
 Consigned to endless fame.

Unconsecrated is this grave,  
 Unblessed by holy hands ;  
 No bell here tolls its solemn sound.  
 No monument here stands.

But here the patriot's tears are shed,  
 The poor man's blessing given ;  
 These consecrate the virtuous dead,  
 These waft their fame to Heaven.

Robert, who had performed some important commissions for some of the leaders implicated in 1798, conceived an intention of going to the Continent some time in the year 1800. It is suspected that this journey was undertaken for a higher object than that of pleasure. Before setting out he went to see his brother who was a state prisoner at Fort St George, in Scotland, from whom it is likely he received instructions for the Irish refugees in France, and also for the Executive power. He stayed two months with his brother and returned to Dublin in time to be a spectator in the House of Commons of those wild scenes that were enacted, immediately the precursors of the passing of the Union Act ; and we come to the last scene, in the panorama of Castlereagh's iniquity in this case, we see Grattan carried in a litter to the house to deliver his dying speech against England's baseness. ' Connection ' he says, ' is a wise and profound policy ; but connection without an Irish Parliament is connection without its principle, without analogy or condition, without the pride of honour that shall attend it ; it is innovation, it is peril, it is subjugation—not connection (applause). Yet I do not give up the country : I see her in a swoon, but she is not dead (applause). Though in her tomb she lies, helpless and motionless, still there is on her lips a spirit of life, and on her cheek a glow of beauty :—



Thou art not conquered ; beauty's ensign yet  
Is crimson in thy lips and in thy cheeks,  
And death's pale flag is not advanced here.

While a plank of the vessel sticks together I will not leave her. Let the courtier present his flimsy sail and carry the light barque of his faith with every new breath of wind, I will remain anchored here—with fidelity to the fortunes of my country—faithful to her freedom, faithful to her fall' (applause). But the gold of England proved more irresistible to a venal parliament, than the eloquence of this first of earthly orators, and the union was passed. But while this deep wrong to Ireland was enacting, there was a noble youth to be seen, listening in the gallery of the house, to all that was passing, in the most solemn and attentive manner, who, when the speaker, throwing down the bill upon the table, (with what seemed to be undisguised emotions of extreme dissatisfaction) declared it was passed, slowly retired from the scene of iniquity, after taking a sacred vow, never to relax in his deep resolve, until he would free at some future period his trampled and enslaved country, while he secretly breathed to her within his own bosom these words of comfort:—

'Thy chains as they rankle, thy blood as it runs,  
But make thee more painfully dear to thy sons,  
Whose hearts, like the young of the desert-bird's nest,  
Drink love in each life drop that flows from thy breast.'

Robert Emmet now started for the continent as the last plank of Freedom's semblance was withdrawn from his country ; when the Island though not lifeless seemed to lie in a trance ; when she seemed in her darkest and most sluggish hour of captivity ; when the wild hurricane of treachery on one side and rebellion on the other, which convulsed her political waters, had subsided into a stillness and unbroken repose. But beneath this awful guise, no one knew better than the young patriot that some terrible design lurked, beneath these signs of apparent calmness, that there lingered the hot ashes of a volcano which was ready to burst out afresh on the first favourable opportunity. It was to facilitate this object—the idol of his heart—the day dream of his youth—that our young hero embarked for the continent, through which we are constrained to trace his wandering footsteps for a few years. We have no proofs or knowledge of his real object or intentions while travelling on the continent, further, than through conjecture, until the close of the second year after his departure. Travelling under the guise of a young gentleman seeking for information or pleasure, we find him making a tour through Holland and Switzerland and also visiting many places in France.

During this time he must have been deeply engaged in studying the tactics of war, from military books which were in his possession ; for they bear strong evidence of the untiring industry, and anxious care given by the young patriot during their perusal. One of those volumes on military tactics which has come into the possession of Madden, is filled with pencil notes, in Robert's handwriting, " which one," he says, " might suppose written by a person whose most intense application had been given to the subject of the work, and whose closest attention had been bestowed on every line." During his wanderings the young patriot never for a moment forgot his country, or her slighted cause, and he represents himself as an exile, sending up a constant prayer to heaven for her freedom (applause). His sentiments, at this time, are breathed through his own lines :—

Ah ! where is now my peaceful cot,  
 Ah ! where my happy home ?  
 No peaceful cot, alas ! is mine,  
 An exile now I roam—  
 Far from my country I am driven,  
 A wanderer sent from thee,  
 But still, my constant prayer to heaven,  
 Shall be to make thee free.

The peace between England and France, concluded at Amiens, in March, 1802, was doomed, as it was not difficult to foresee, to be but of short duration. As the rupture between those two powers was drawing near we find Emmet hastening to Paris in the autumn of the same year. Here he remained two months, during which time he had two interviews with Buonaparte, then First Consul, and several with Talleyrand, who was Minister of Foreign Affairs. At Paris he met several of the distinguished Irish refugees, amongst whom were his brother Thomas Addis Emmet, Lord Cloncurry, Mac Nevin and O'Connor, all of whom had not given up the idea of making another attempt to free Ireland from the British yoke. The youngest Emmet's interview with Buonaparte inspired him with unfavourable impressions of his purity of intentions or good faith towards Ireland, and his ideas with regard to Talleyrand, to whom the First

Consul referred him, seem to have been not much more favourable. Though Robert Emmet was the youngest of the chiefs of this party then in Paris, it was reserved for him to discover first the true character of Buonaparte, and the first to place no reliance in him, further than that he would give assistance to their cause as far as it would be profitable to himself; and he saw through the First Consul an inclination to annex Ireland to France, which he determined to oppose even more firmly than the oppression of England. The penetration of the young Irish enthusiast saw but one real motive in the words of Napoleon, that was to declare war against England and to make a descent upon her shores, and that he cared little for the liberty of Ireland, further than that it would be useful in facilitating his own object. Emmet resolved to offer him no means in his power for the easy conquest of Ireland; but determined to act in Ireland in conjunction with his attack upon the shores of England, when he might be able to establish an independent republic in his native land, which Buonaparte would find dangerous to his policy to crush for the aggrandizement of France. Ireland, that supplied the navy of England with the best seamen in the world, and her army with the finest soldiers, would be more safe and useful to France as a sincere and grateful ally than a reluctant subject. Knowing this, Emmet thought it would restrain the unquenchable ambition of Buonaparte, but beyond this, he had no trust in his sincerity; and he was the only one of his party not duped by his machinations and deceit. And he was soon able to give his colleagues a full proof of Buonaparte's duplicity and infidelity to their cause, while he never ceased to have frequent communication with Ireland and the chiefs of her rebellious people then in France. This was a copy of a dispatch sent to Mr. Otto, then French minister at the court of London, the contents of which Robert was put in possession of, which were, that if the English would drive out of her territories all those obnoxious to Napoleon, the French government would act with perfect reciprocity. As Madden says, "there is no mistaking this reciprocity." It is quite evident that Buonaparte determined to place the Irish refugees—the men he had been treating with



and luring by fair promises for two years, at the disposal of the English government. In this we have a picture of the faith of Napoleon the First ; those who sought an asylum in the land of liberty, under the protection of the first of warriors, were to be deceived by him with fair promises, while he was leading them to the sacrifice. He was going to forsake the cause of the oppressed country, and give over its noblest and bravest sons to that nation to which he bore the most implacable hatred. Should Ireland revere the name of Napoleon ? No ! it ought to be hateful to her (merely as much so as to Tyrol), it brought her nothing but misfortune, except by chance, through the fear by which England beheld the increasing power of France. Yet we find it revered by many in Ireland, while many of her true patriots, whom he meditated evil to, are forgotten . Alas ! how fickle and capricious do we find the minds of the majority of the human family—the name to be remembered forgotten, and the one to be forgotten remembered (applause). But the service rendered Ireland by Napoleon was paid back with double interest. It was reserved for an Irish general, and Irish valour, at last, to extinguish his power and to pull him down from that giddy height of ambition to which he soared. And often did he regret, when exiled to a solitary rock in the midst of the ocean, his neglect of Ireland, and the lightness with which he looked upon her insignificance. There is no doubt, as a French lady remarks, Napoleon wanted that nobleness of soul which we imagine always should be the concomitant of a powerful genius like his. Emmet had penetration enough, even though so youthful and enthusiastic, as to discover this great defect, and to distrust the sincerity of his promises, which the other exiles had not the perspicuity to discover until made more apparent. Though Emmet distrusted the professions of the First Consul, yet he determined that the rising intended in Ireland should take place about the time that the French would invade England. For this purpose he sought a final interview with Buonaparte, and learned from him that hostilities would be renewed in May, and that the expedition against England would be undertaken in the month of August. With this assurance, (the only part of the conference on Napoleon's side,

which he deemed worthy of being relied on,) he started to his native land to organise those still ripe for rebellion, undeterred by the sad fate of many of the movers in the last insurrection ; and in order to disguise his intentions and avoid suspicion he made his rout homewards by Holland and England [applause]. He parted with his brother, Thomas Addis, at Amsterdam, never more to behold him in this life. While unconscious of this final separation from him he loved so dearly, his young heart, buoyant with bright hopes and his noble soul glowing with enthusiasm and expectation as he looked from the vessel's prow, which bore him proudly over the silent and expansive sea, to the bright blue hills of Erin ; we can fancy him addressing these lines of his to the genius of his country :—

Genius of Erin tune thy harp  
 To freedom, let its sound awake  
 Thy prostrate sons, and nerve their hearts ;  
 Oppression's iron bonds to break.

Long and strong then strike the lyre,  
 Strike it with prophetic lays,  
 Bid it rouse the slumbering fire,  
 Bid the fire of freedom blaze.

Tell them glory waits their efforts,  
 Strongly wooed she will be won,  
 Freedom, show, by peace attended,  
 Waits to crown each gallant son.

Greatly daring bid them gain her,  
 Conquerors, bid them live or die ;  
 Erin in her children triumphs,  
 Marked by glory if they die.

But if her sons, too long oppress,  
 No spark of freedom's fire retain,  
 And, with sad and servile breast,  
 Basely wear the galling chain.

Vainly, then you'd call to glory,  
 Vainly freedom's blessings praise,  
 Man debased to willing thralldom,  
 Freedom's blessing cannot raise.

Check thy hand, and change thy strain,  
 Change it to a sound of woe,  
 Ireland's blasted hopes proclaim,  
 Ireland's endless sufferings show.

Shew her fields with blood ensanguined,  
 With her children's blood bedewed,  
 Shew her desolated plains,  
 With their murdered bodies strewed.

Mark that hamlet, how it blazes,  
 Hear the shrieks of horror rise,  
 See the fiends prepare their tortures,  
 See oh ! tortured victim dies.

Ruin stalks his haggard round,  
 O'er the plains his banner waves,  
 Sweeping from her wasted land  
 All but tyrants and their slaves.

All but tyrants and their slaves !  
 Shall they live in Erin's isle ?  
 O'er her martyred patriots' graves,  
 Shall oppression's minions smile.

Erin's sons awake !—awake !  
 Oh ! too long, too long, you sleep ;  
 Awake ! arise ! your fetters break,  
 Nor let your country bleed and weep.

The terrible scheme which Robert Emmet now journeyed on to accomplish is considered, by the fastidious in war, and those who have no fancy for the ring of a rifle, except in bringing down a wild turkey ; or the clash of steel, except through a sirloin of beef, as one of the wildest undertakings a hair brained scamp could conceive. This idea has gone forth, and has been received by many more intelligent—more patriotic—and not so selfish, who are ignorant of the connecting links and chance resources relied on by the young patriot. He was too enthusiastic and his conduct was rash, I will readily admit, but nevertheless his plans were well founded and he had a good chance of success. But he was not the author of the conspiracy though he headed the rising in 1803, he was in France when he heard there were preparations making for a new



outbreak : this being the very thing he contemplated, he hastened to give it all the aid his genius or purse would afford (loud applause). According to Madden, on the eve of his departure his plans received the warm approbation of many of the leaders of the last insurrection then at Paris, and Mac Nevin even gave him a proclamation calling on his countrymen to renew the struggle for freedom. This intended revolt was not looked upon by England as a puny or chimerical attempt joined to a French invasion, as we find by extracts from intercepted letters taken on board an English vessel, which clearly shows how much the government party feared an outbreak in Ireland, and what disaffection still was apparent amongst Emmet's countrymen. Lord Charles Bentinck to his brother, then Governor of Madras, says, "If Ireland be not attended it will be lost ; these rascals (meaning the Irish people) are as ripe as ever for rebellion." Next we have Lord Grenville to the Marquis of Wellesley, "I am not certain whether the event of war which our wise ministers have at last declared, may not have induced them to beg you to continue your stay in India some time longer. I hope nothing, however, will prevent me from having the pleasure of seeing you next year, *supposing at that period that you have still a country to revisit.*" Again, from Mr. Finer to General Lake, we have these words, "The invasion which has been so long the favourite project of the First Consul will certainly take place." I will now give another and concluding extract from one of the East India Company's directors to Mr. Ferguson Smith : "I have heard from the first authority that if the French can land in Ireland with some troops, they will be immediately joined by 100,000 Irish." These sentiments are the exponents of the feelings of the British government at this time, for the writers of these letters were all more or less connected with it or with individuals holding high posts under it. Then the idea of a certainty of this invasion of Britain, and the advantage which the Irish would take of it, on which Emmet's design was founded, was not the opinion of him alone, it was secretly acknowledged by the British government, and heartily concurred in by some of the ablest leaders of '98 (applause). Yet it is looked upon by many

as a day dream which originated only in the fertile brain of a wild and fanciful enthusiast. Though Emmet's attempt at insurrection proved futile, the ground work of his plot was well laid, though upset so easily by unforeseen circumstances, but it might as well have turned the tide of Irish affairs another way if these chance circumstances were with it. The penetrating intellect and experience of Napoleon caused him to say, when an exile at St. Helena, "On what depends the fate of empires ! If in the place of the expedition of Egypt, I had made that of Ireland ; if some trifling obstacles had not prevented my expedition of Boulogne, where would England be to-day ?" With this expectation of a renewal of hostilities between the two powers, the young patriot embarked for his native soil to risk his life and his fortune in that slighted cause he had vowed never to forsake (applause). This undertaking having the approbation of many devoted leaders of '98 then in Paris, with a knowledge of a movement being resolved upon in England by a secret society formed there, and having the assurance of many persons in Ireland, of rank and influence, to give him their aid in every way to mature and put his plans into execution, he landed in Dublin in the October of 1802, and soon placed himself in communication with some of the leaders of the last rebellion who had requested his immediate return. There were also others behind the screen who were aware of the movement and supported the cause in secret ; these were not men of little character or of humble rank in society, but wealthy and distinguished persons whose deliberate reflection and sound judgment could be relied on. Very few of the names of these, connected with Emmet, have oozed out. As the *Nation* says, when he appeared before the court, the " seal of secrecy was upon his lips, but he said, however, that there were above him men before whom he bowed with respectful deference"—two lords are supposed to be of this number. This I presume vindicates the character and motives of Robert Emmet, by showing the disaffection and conspiracy much more general than it has been believed, and that it was not confined to a few desperate characters, but had the sanction of many of the upper classes who gave their assistance and anxiously looked forward to its suc-



cess, and although Emmet was the life and soul of the movement of 1803, and the principal in the preparations made for it, yet he was not the original designer of that movement. It was got up, says Hope, one of the insurgents, to second a movement of Irishmen in England under Colonel Despard. Why I have dwelt upon these objects so much is, that justice requires to be done to the principles of the young patriot, whose proceedings were so much stigmatized as weak and trifling by those who were unacquainted with the true aspect of the affairs on which his hopes were grounded, and the assistance and advantages he reckoned on which induced him to renew the struggle (loud applause). "When we examine," says the *Nation* of 1855, "the plan of attack, of retreat, and of defence, traced by the master hand of Robert Emmet, the calculations on which it was based, and the accidents which caused it to fail, it is impossible not to feel that the government escaped by a sort of miracle." After Robert's arrival in Ireland we find him living in the house of Mrs. Palmer, at Harold's Cross, under the assumed name of Hewit. It was represented that he had come back only for the purpose of settling his private affairs, while he freely communicated with many of the exiles then on the continent. In Dublin he mingled during the first few months after his return with fashionable and literary circles, and amongst other places visited once more the seat of Curran. Though Curran had treated him coldly before he left Ireland, he could not resist the attraction which still drew him to his house, his daughter, that young fascinating creature, the brilliant luminary that ever glowed upon his recollections throughout his absence as warmly as on the day of his departure, when he had breathed to her the fond farewell of a sincere and unchanging heart (applause). Emmet's plans seem to have been formed before coming to Ireland, and a renewal of hostilities against France being declared by the King of England in the March of 1803, he was busily employed through the intervening months and that of the outbreak preparing arms and ammunition for the insurgents (loud applause). His principal depot was in Thomas-street, where he worked unceasingly with his colleagues, scarcely allowing himself a short repose on a hard mattress. He had taken

several other houses in Dublin where he also inspected the making and storing of all sorts of arms and ammunition. It is admitted that his great coolness and judgment, which it is said never forsook him to the last, were apparent in the inspection of these works, and that his ability in organization was of the first order. A considerable fortune, which was bequeathed to him by his father, was exhausted in these preparations, after which Mr. Long, who was one of his party, advanced £1,400. We may fairly judge of this preparation by the immense stores found in Thomas-street after the attempt failed. There were more than 20,000 pikes found in it, besides an adequate number of muskets, with abundance of powder and ball. Besides the depot in Thomas-street he had one in Marshalsea-lane, and another in Patrick-street, and though there were forty men employed in these depots, their preparations were carried on with the utmost secrecy (applause). "The men," says one of his staff, "behaved with the greatest prudence, none seeming to wish to know more than concerned their own department, each man's duty was kept separate and secret from the other." While Emmet was making these preparations and maturing his plan of attack, he was in communication with the disaffected in the country, and had secret agents amongst the people preparing them to follow up the advantage, if successful in taking Dublin. There were a great number of men from many places who served in the last rebellion who were to come in when called on, but he relied most on the Kildare men who were to come to the number of 1,500 (applause). The chief points of the plan of attack were these, which, if they had proved successful, there is no doubt but that there would have been a general rising all over the island, and it is not very difficult to divine what success would follow where the oppressor was unprepared and too much occupied with the thought of defending his own shores from the incursions of a formidable invader : Emmet and some of his most desperate and trustworthy adherents were to drive into the Castle yard in carriages, all well armed, and take it by surprise, when a body of men were to come to their assistance, while the Kildare and Wicklow men were to pour into the city to join the insurgents there under the directions of confidential

leaders. They were in two bodies to attack the artillery barrack, Island Bridge; and the Pigeon House, while Emmet was to take the Viceroy and his suite prisoners (applause). The success or failure of this undertaking was to be made known to the adjacent country by signals in as short a space of time as possible. Emmet intended not to put these plans into execution until they would coincide with Buonaparte's invasion of England, before which he expected a great part of the troops stationed in Ireland would be drawn away to oppose the French landing, but an unfortunate occurrence forced him to make the attempt sooner than he expected, or abandon it altogether. This was the explosion at the depot in Patrick-street which made his scheme abortive and his failure complete. This unfortunate circumstance happened on the 16th of July, and now the vigilance of the Castle was awakened; an Orange paper drew the attention of the Government to its precarious position, that of "sleeping over a mine; for what purpose but for insurrection," it said, "were these combustibles preparing." No longer there was a chance of Emmet's movements being kept concealed, the time had come too soon, but he should act—act against what? will be the interrogatory of some astonished, misanthropic, ludicrous, lubric, dissimulating-faced individuals, who, as it has been said, would require the victim of tyranny "when his brain was on fire, and every fiend of hell was let loose on his heart, he should then, it seems, have placed himself before his mirror, he should have taught the stream of agony to flow decorously down his forehead. He should have writhed with grace, and groaned with melody." Act against what? reiterate these loyal followers of a Pitt or a Castlereagh. We answer—the long tyranny and oppression of England—against the massacre of thousands of innocent victims—against tortures so terrible and revolting as only to have had their origin in hell—against the horrible crimes of murder and rapine; temptation and extortion—against, O England blush! if there is one still left to mount to thy cheek—against the wholesale violation of Erin's fair daughters—the most virtuous women in the world



(applause). These were the crimes daily perpetrated that roused Emmet's young spirit to stir up the expiring embers of liberty and to awake the dormant passion of death before dishonour!—these were the heinous atrocities which caused him to awaken in the souls of his countrymen the burning recollections of gross insult with a spirit of revenge or resistance, but above all he wished that they would show themselves as men worthy of freedom. "You are now called upon" he says to the people of Ireland, "to show the world that you are competent to take your place among nations, that you have a right to claim their recognisance of you as an independant country, by the only satisfactory proof you can furnish of your capability of maintaining your independance—your wresting it from England with your own hands." . . . . "Religious disqualifications are but one of many grievances of which Ireland has to complain. Our intention is to remove not that only, but ever other oppression under which we labour. We fight that all of us may have our country, and, that done, each of us shall have our own religion" (applause). Disunion and dissention he looked upon as the bane of Irish prosperity, and impressed with this sad idea and his ever pervading thought of justice, he cries out—"We war not against property—we war against no religious sect,—we war not against past opinions or prejudices,—we war against English dominion." He cared not for difference of sect, or religion—the foundation of his benevolent design was based upon union of Irish hearts in the one grand cause—the liberty of Ireland (applause). In the words of his friend and school fellow he might have said:—

Shall I ask the brave soldier who fights by my side,  
 In the cause of mankind, if our creeds agree?  
 Shall I give up the friend I have valued and tried,  
 If he kneel not before the same altar with me?

Let humanity exist in his country, let her people act in concert for her independance, and let the green flag float in the breeze over the grey turrets of Dublin Castle and he was satisfied—the happiness of liberty to his poor suffering countrymen was his sole end and aim. His love of it and his hatred of

oppression may be gleaned from his own brilliant language.—“ Liberty” he says, “ is the daughter of oppression, and tyranny like the poetic bird of the desert, consumes itself with its own fires. We have a striking example in the history of Ireland, whose intellect and power have increased in direct proportion with the effect made to keep her down. In this sense, one may sustain that apparent paradox, that the greatest evils of a nation become often the instruments of its salvation. The rights of man to liberty augment in direct proportion to his civilization. Dykes may be opposed to a flood ; but if the heaped up waters find no other issue they will overwhelm the vain obstacles which a presumptuous master opposes to it. Our suffering, whatever betide, cannot last much longer, for Nature revolts against tyranny, and the chains which bind us are tightened to the utmost ; it needs but an effort of either the oppressor or the oppressed to break them, to restore freedom to Ireland (applause). Misery ought not to be endured patiently, except when no remedy can be applied to it. Sampson who turned the mill for his oppressor, buried them in the ruins of the temple when his strength was restored to him. If Ireland, in her weakness, has long borne the chains of slavery, it is no reason why she should continue under the yoke the day she shall be able to shake it off.” This day he thought had arrived, and he addressed his countrymen with his call to arms :—

Brothers, rise, your country calls,  
 Let us gain her rights or die  
 In her cause ; who nobly falls,  
 Decked with brightest wreath shall lie  
 And Freedom's genius o'er his bier  
 Shall place the wreath, and drop the tear.

Long by England's power opprest,  
 Groaning long beneath her chain,  
 Ireland's ill-used power detest,  
 Burst her yoke, your rights regain ;  
 The standard raise of liberty,  
 Ireland ! you shall yet be free.

Brothers, march, march on to glory,  
 In your country's cause unite,

Freedom's blessings see before you,  
 Erin's sons for freedom fight ;  
 England's legions we defy,  
 We swear to conquer or to die.

The cause of liberty is sacred, it has had its heroes and its martyrs in all ages—divine Omnipotence in His wise dispensations has implanted within the human breast a love of freedom, which is perceptible in the savage as well as in the most civilized, but those capable of making great sacrifices to it must be of the most disinterested, unselfish nature, strongest mind and most exalted in soul (applause). The man who from a high rank stoops down to shield the oppressed and persecuted from the vengeance of tyranny and amidst all the threats and terrors of an unprincipled enemy, points out the right road to freedom, rushes forward for their salvation while he bids them follow—this is the true patriot who, if he falls, dies not in vain. In conclusion, we may anticipate another impertinent question which will be asked by the fag-end of a pinchbeck aristocracy—that unhealthy swarm generated beneath the sardonic smile of a cruel tyrant, namely—what are the reasons that have actuated him to insurrection ? And we answer—that which Nature tells him will induce his countrymen to follow—that instinct which tells him God never intended one nation to be the persecuted slave of another—that instinct which tells him when one man preys upon another that resistance is but right—that idea, which speaks of retaliation on a cruel government as justifiable ; which speaks of wringing justice for the poor and persecuted from the arrogant and tyrannical in power, as an obligation, incumbent on the superior few of mankind, to be performed, in order to uphold the rank of man in the scale of created beings—that feeling, which looks upon power misdirected as a dangerous plaything in the hand of a child, which ought to be instantly removed out of the reach of its possessor (applause). That influence which speaks to the heart of man to uphold the dignity of his race against inordinate haughtiness and intolerable control of base rulers without the fear of punishment or denunciation. That innate principle which speaks to the heart of man and tells it that the



most sublime act of mercy he can show the world is the dispossessing or restraining a tyrant—the most acceptable gift of benevolence paid to a suffering people is to cast off their chains of slavery ; the most agreeable and highest blessing except that immediately bestowed by heaven, the raising up of abject vassalage to happiness and enlightenment. That motive which makes nations free by giving martyrs to the cause of liberty, while asserting the rights of man and combatting for that dignity and freedom which the Creator gave him as a common inheritance pointing out to far off generations, the nobility and independence of his species, and the exalted position which he was destined to hold upon earth. That divine essence of thought which springs from a celestial source, though conveyed through an earthly channel, which tells man that opposition to injustice is sacred justice, and that freedom is a birth-right which it becomes a debasement in him not to maintain. That opposition to force which becomes a national evil that is a salutary and wise precaution—an order from a high authority, higher than any on earth—the God of nations who instils a knowledge that that power was originally intended to be concentrated for the good and prosperity of all grades, and therefore the primitive condition on which he gave it should never be violated or sacrificed to the demon of ambition or profligacy. That principle of liberty which makes an honest man (when the sycophant courtier or the abject slave fly to the strong side of oppression and fawn on the tyrant), spurn the golden temptations of misdirected power, stand firm to the cause of the oppressed, and while awaiting the decree of Heaven or the decision of fate to be faithful through every trial to the interests of his country. Yes, this is the feeling, the motive, the principle, the instinct, the sacrament of honour instilled by the High Priest of Nature, which speaks to the heart of man, tells him when national power is usurped and liberty forced to abdicate, and that resistance is an obligation and insurrection a duty. Such were the reasons that stirred the noble soul of young Emmet and thus we will dismiss him this evening with the recollection of his own manly appeal ringing in our ears. “Countrymen if a cruel necessity force us to retaliate, we will bury our resentment in the field of

battle; if we fall we will fall where we fight for our country. Fully impressed with this determination, of the necessity of adhering to which past experience has but too fatally convinced us, and with the justness of the cause which we have embarked in, we make our final and solemn appeal to the sword, and as the cause of Ireland deserves to prosper, may God give us the victory."

## SECOND LECTURE.

On the evening of the 19th inst., Mr. G. H. Kirk resumed in the Mayoralty Rooms, his lectures on the life and times of Emmet. On coming forward to the rostrum Mr. Kirk was welcomed with warm plaudits. He said :—

Let tyrants sneer, and sycophants rail, yet, disguise ye as we may, still slavery thou art a bitter draught, while patriotism thy avowed and deadly enemy is one of the brightest and fairest flowers that heaven has sent to blossom and bear fruit upon earth. In the human breast alone this plant receives its nourishment, and if that nutriment is not drawn from an honest heart, no longer it flourishes, but sickens and dies. The soil in which this fair flower grows in its most beautiful form, is ever found to contain the seeds, and give forth the germs of the noblest and rarest qualities of nature (applause). Patriotism !—what a noble sentiment is contained in this word. It embraces a grand idea of all that is beautiful in philanthropy, and all that is brilliant in liberty ; it brings within minute focus, the instinct of love, the boundlessness of benevolence, the attractiveness of home and country, and the despised dangers and the unceasing watchings of a great and mighty soul in the cause of humanity even through the severest ordeals. The synonyme of love and unselfishness ; no thing of time or native of any particular spot ; living through all ages and illumining the pages of many a clime since nations were first formed. Love of home is an instinct planted in the human breast by the God of Nature, Though that human being may in after years become a homeless wanderer, though that human being may become a rich cosmopolitan, yet, there is ever found in the breast of that being, a secret magnetic attractiveness to

the place of his nativity ; there are youthful scenes and incidents connected with that spot, which will be ever found as he nears that home, even after years of estrangement, to come warm over his imagination, until in the felicity or sorrow, of the spell wrought moment he will exclaim—" ah ! go where we will, yet, the quiet happy home of youth is still dearest of all"—

" There is a land, of every land the pride,  
Beloved by heaven o'er all the world beside ;  
Where brighter suns dispense serener light,  
And milder moons emparadise the night ;

\*     \*     \*     \*     \*

Where shall that land, that spot of earth be  
found ?

Art thou a man?—a patriot ?—look around ;  
O, thou shalt find, howe'er thy footsteps roam,  
That land thy country, and that spot thy  
home !"

This love of home, when found with the lowest, the least worthy, or the least nationalised of the human family, what must it not be when found to glow in a great and good man's bosom—the fullest extent of the word is then realized. It is not alone a selfish or a local feeling that begets it—no ! philanthropy and duty step in, to assist in its formation, and it is beautifully moulded for the improvement and liberty of the human race—its object, the happiness of man and the bringing him a nearer likeness to his Creator by moral and intellectual perfection. The patriot, no matter what his clime, his colour, his creed, who has elevated the dignity of his race and has added to the prosperity and peace of the land that gave him birth—that man must be looked upon as a benefactor to humanity (applause). But he that has fallen while pointing the way to freedom's goal, though he has to all appearance achieved nothing, though he seems to have tightened the chain of slavery more firmly round his kinsmen and plunged his native land deeper into the loathsome night of bondage, yet, raise the veil from these secret springs of nations and you will find that he has not fallen in vain. No ! that martyr of liberty awakens virtues in many



a bosom that otherwise would have slumbered, flings the dark shadow of selfishness from many a soul, while his name acts as a spell-word in times far beyond those he lives or moves in. And such a one was he whom we will again bring before you. Selfishness was foreign to him, philanthropic and domestic love were sacred to him, affection for home and country was blissful to him, admiration for virtue and honour was congenial to him, but fear or injustice were unknown to him (applause). This combination of the better qualities of man raises up in the hearts of a great number of his countrymen, even in the lowly and unlettered peasants of the bogs of that fair land, so dear to him, a virtuous spirit of true patriotism that can never be found shining out so pure where the blood of the patriot martyr has not been shed in the cause of freedom ; and his name has become a watchword to a galaxy of noble youths, brave and ardent, and noble as himself, who followed in the path he trod forty five years after he dangled like a dog or a murderer from the hideous scaffold of an unprincipled tyrant (applause). The name of Emmet is still dear to his countrymen ; even the labourer relates his sorrowful tale to his children as they sit round his turf fire on a winter's evening, his nobleness of soul in the cause of fatherland, impressing their young hearts with a patriotic love of the land that gave them birth. Switzerland had her Tell, who threw off the iron yoke of despotism, but Ireland had her Emmet, who, though he fell in the same undertaking, without accomplishing it, is nevertheless as dear to the hearts of her people (loud applanse). "Many a lost cause," as Miss Julia Kavanagh has said "is nobler than the victorious one." This saying has proved itself but too true, in more instances than that of the conquered languages of Provence, and amongst them none shine out more gloriously than that of Robert Emmet. His young life was quenched in a blood-stained and premature grave by a merciless and victorious tyrant ; but the strength of the one is mouldering like an old pile whose foundations had been giving way from time to time before the rude shocks of ages and its own overpowering weight ; while the name and the cause of the other have lived beyond the tomb, and seem to be but

gathering the blossoms of immortality from the extended fields of Time (cheer). Censurers of his conduct were numerous and are still so, but who has escaped censure? The patriot of Poland has fallen under its mildewing breath, although—"Freedom shrieked when Kosciusco fell," So has that brave little band, led by Myles O'Reilly, who fought under the burning sun of Italy as only Irishmen can fight. But Emmet's insurrection, though it had but one in the history of nations as a precursor or precedent, yet, that one came to a successful issue. This example, it must have been, that made him conceive his plan of attack, for it was formed in the same manner though the issue was different. In 1640, Portugal was delivered from the yoke of Spain by forty determined men surprising the castle of Lisbon, and seizing the vice queen and the Spanish authorities. This *coup de main*, so bravely carried out, was followed by the immediate rising of the people, who soon freed their native land. But the Portuguese were more fortunate than the Irish; Emmet's insurrection was a failure, but not from any moral or physical deficiency of courage in its leader. And now, as we look back through the haze of some sixty five years, can we not reconcile it to our minds that that boyish undertaking might have proved successful, and if so, will we not immediately exclaim—then at such a period was it not worth the trial? Yes, we will reiterate, it was; any attempt, where there was such hope of success, even though some noble spirits were to fall in a holy cause was worth the trial. If Emmet brought about the redemption of his native land, what sufferings and horrors would he not have saved its people from ever since (hear, hear). Look upon our two million countrymen expatriated, or coffinless paupers' graves, the victims of starvation; or their dead bodies, thrown from the overcrowded emigrant ship, until at last, their bones on the bottom of the ocean have made a continued track from their native shore to the far west, the region of their adopted home; while the brutal English sailor, (as Vere Foster, our Irish Howard, can so fully attest,) forcibly violated their daughters' chastity and then cast them away upon a far land, without friends or kindred, to earn the bread of sin. The three dearest things to



us, O fellow kinsmen ! the three dearest things to the Irish peasant were assailed—his love of home, his love of the virtue of its daughters, and the love of the religion of his forefathers, which nor earth, nor hell, could induce him to abjure (cheers). If Emmet had the slightest chance of averting such dreadful catastrophes—then I say—was not his attempt worth the trial ? I, for one, am ready to endorse it, with a plain, honest yes (cheers). Men may have their faith in moral force, in parliamentary policy, or alien imperialism ; I will not quarrel with them for this—men may be very good, very honest Irishmen, and hold this frail doctrine of (I can scarcely call it) nationality ; but I will ever uphold, that war, and the shedding of blood is sometimes holy, and that it unfolds a national cause and a national will, self reliance, and aspirations, and bright deeds, that bring earthly beings nearer resemblances of spiritual ones—if even, to the destroying angel bending the proud will of a Pharaoh to release a captive people from the bonds of ages. A learned divine, in speaking of war, has said, “ Thus it is in the order of Divine Providence, that peace should be secured by war, and joy be the reward of tribulations.” We will even add to this sentiment, that of John Mitchell’s, that war was as necessary for the good of earth, as thunder and lightning were for to purify the air.” We do not endorse this in the general sense, but spurn for the sterner creed the flimsy idea of victory by moral opposition or not all. The regeneration of a country is even cheaply purchased by the fall of many of her children. A deluge of blood is often the price of freedom, and it is worth it. The flame of independance may be best fed by the blood of the patriot occasionally spilt upon its altar. Yes, the spilling of blood is sometimes a necessary evil—while it punishes for the crime of foul play and teaches the virtue of martial courage ; it manifests that the appeal to the sword is the best argument that can be adduced to a tyrant and the surest to make him quail. Shakespeare puts into the mouth of Henry V. these memorable words :—“ Now, if these men have defeated and outrun native punishment, though they can outstrip men, they have no wings to fly from God ; war is his beadle ; war is his vengeance !” There

is no doubt it often brings up to the surface of society the worst passions and animal propensities of a people, but when the stormy tide has flowed and seethed to its utmost or farthest limits, it ebbs slowly back, and like the Nile, while retreating to its farther boundary, after having overflowed the adjacent country, leaving a rich fertilizing substance that makes the people rejoice with an abundant harvest, so it raises, in the struggles and enthusiasm of manliness, for the salvation of a people, the redemption of a country's violated freedom (applause). To reap this abundant harvest of nationality and self-reliance is the most apparent evidence of its good ; for the success, if not the best, is the fullest justification for the shedding of blood. " War," it has been said, " is the game in which kings or governments seldom win ; the people never. . . . To be defended is almost as great an evil as to be attacked ; and the common people have often found the shield of the protector to be no less oppressive than the sword of an invader." This is to a great extent, I am sorry to say, often too true, but that the people are always the losers in war, is certainly to state a paradox that I cannot subscribe to. History informs us in many instances of the contrary. The apostles of freedom have often launched their noble and fearless bark of liberty upon the stormy breakers of war's troubled waters, with a full hope and faith in the doctrine of blood, until they steered their regenerated countrymen to a bright haven of peace, prosperity, and happiness, where anchored, their bark rested in security, until the effeminacy of wealth or the prostration of manly energy set it once more adrift over the stagnant ocean of slavery without oar or helm. And even if these apostles of liberty fall, the seed is sown that will fructify and bear fruit. " If the spring puts forth no blossoms, in the summer there will be no beauty ; and in the autumn no fruit ;" thus, if the young regenerating spirit is not baptised in blood, the sword cannot accomplish reform, and it will yield no harvest :—

The tribune's tongue and poet's pen  
 May sow the seed in prostrate men ;  
 But 'tis the soldier's sword alone  
 Can reap the crop so boldly sown.

Our doctrine has been, and ever shall be, that when a people are oppressed a manly appeal to the sword is laudable, and that the growth of a nation may be best fertilized even by the blood of its patriot-martyrs :—

What checks the knave ?

The sword !

What smites to save ?

The sword !

What wreaks the wrong

Unpunished long,

At last upon the guilty strong ?

The sword ?

Then cease thy proud task never,

While rests a link to sever,

Guard of the free,

We'll cherish thee,

And keep thee bright for ever !

Having set out with such principles as a preamble, which I fancy were exactly those of Robert Emmet, I will now endeavour to trace him from the commencement of the outbreak of 1803, to the close of his bright, brief, and glorious career. The 23rd of July was fixed for the outbreak, seven days after the explosion took place. Emmet thought to have delayed the rising until the month of August, when he expected the invasion of England to take place, but there being signs publicly shown of dissatisfaction, which could not, he thought, but awaken the suspicions of government, and that the explosion of one of his depots in Patrick-street would now prove these suspicions well grounded, he determined to delay his project no longer and to make the attempt as soon as possible before his plans would be discovered, for all his chance lay in secrecy, a surprise by a *grand coup de main* being absolutely necessary for his success. Unfortunately, on the morning of action the leaders were found to be of different opinions ; Emmet and Allen were for the immediate rising, others were for a delay until some time later, but this, Emmet knew, was to abandon the attempt altogether. Several discussions and consultations took place during the day at Mr. Long's, in Crow-street, in the depot in Thomas-street, at Mr. Allen's in College Green, where, after a



great discrepancy of opinion, many, whose voices were raised for a postponement of the rising, withdrew from the project altogether. While this vacillation and tergiversation was going on in the city among the leaders, there were treachery and cowardice going on in other quarters ; the messenger sent to the brave O'Dwyer, the outlaw of the Wicklow mountains, who was in readiness, expecting the summons to march with his hardy mountaineers on Dublin, this man betrayed the trust reposed in him and went no farther than Rathfarnham. The Kildare men had arrived early in the afternoon, but were met evidently by a traitor, who informed them that it was determined to abandon the attack for some time longer, and these men, on this information, took their departure from Canal Harbour at five o'clock in the evening. At the Broadstone there were assembled a large number of men, who watched for the signal rocket, which was to apprise them of the moment for action ; this signal they watched for in vain, for it was not given. About three hundred Wexford men, who assembled on the Coal Quay, were on the spot up to a late hour in the evening, and held themselves in readiness for the part allotted to them, but received no commands. Even through Dublin it was given out by some cowardly traitor that the rising was postponed until the following Wednesday, so that the time of assembly being from six till nine, when the final moment arrived Emmet found, instead of two thousand men there were only about eighty assembled for the enterprise, besides, there was division amongst the leaders, there was treachery working its secret mission ; there were a series of blunders and confusion in the depots ; there was misgiving and confusion among many of the intelligent, and a want of confidence quickly spreading among the people ; joined with this the government was made aware of the intended rising. Many of the leaders, instead of being at their different posts, were assembled at Mr. Hevey's, in Thomas Court, where there was no lack of refreshment, while crowds of the country people were engaged in drinking and smoking, and jesting in the best possible humour ; "cracking jokes," says Madden, "and rallying one another, as if the business they were about to enter on was a party of pleasure."

This was not the way the Americans gained their independance a few years before ! No ! while the English columns came on with cheers, they set their teeth, remembered the insults and injuries received, and calmly awaited behind their breast-works in the most solemn silence—immoveable as statues—till their oppressors were within their reach and then rushed on them like tigers (loud applause). While Emmet was reflecting on these series of misfortunes, as the moment for action was drawing nigh, Michael Quigley rushed into the depot and cried out that all was lost, for the army was coming upon them ; an alarm which turned out afterwards to be perfectly groundless. On this intimation the young rebel determined to head his men immediately, and rise or fall with those he had promised to lead either to death or victory. He gave his orders in a tone of firmness and self possession ; put on his uniform, and while the distribution of arms was going on, sent up a single rocket. In his national and rebel costume of emerald green, with two pistols in his belt, he was seen to advance along Thomas-street, at the head of about eighty men, and to go in the direction of the market place. These unfortunate men, who were in a great measure under the influence of drink, were joined on their way by, it is thought, about as many more ; but Emmet found it impossible to make them keep any regularity. The ranks of this disorderly multitude were evidently separated, and the great division and irregularity causing a great distance between the van and the rear. Thus, the unfortunate young leader proceeded, with a heavy heart, to attack the castle ; at the same time fully impressed with the heavy responsibility and danger incurred, by leading an undisciplined and disorderly multitude to battle. When they arrived near the spot where it was intended to muster in full force before their prowess would be tried, it was found that their numbers had decreased to an amazing amount and that it was impossible to restore order. In the midst of this tumult, while Emmet and some of his officers, who determined to follow his fortunes, tried to quell insubordination, a party of police, with their commander, Mr. Edward Wilson, at their head, were observed coming against the insurgents. " Shall I fire ? " said one of the chiefs, named Malachy,



to Robert Emmet. "No," said he, turning the muzzle of his gun aside, "wait till we are attacked first—do not shed blood without necessity." How little these sentiments were dwelt upon afterwards by his murderers. News reached him at this critical juncture that Lord Kilwarden's carriage had been attacked in Thomas-street by a party of the insurgents; Emmet hastily retraced his steps to attempt to save him from the fury of the mob, but he arrived too late, for that kind and humane judge had been ruthlessly murdered, through the means of some scoundrels who had mingled with the rebels for plunder and rapine, and who caused, as one of the insurgents stated, the assassination of Kilwarden in private revenge for an imaginary wrong. When Robert had come up his heart sickened at the sight, and his soul seemed to recoil to its farthest recesses as shuddering with horror he surveyed the scene of blood. But the condition of the young daughter of that benevolent victim of an infuriated mob, made more ferocious by the fumes of alcohol, aroused his slumbering senses, and he caught her fainting in his arms and bore her to a place of safety (applause). This wanton act, it is said, decided the fate of the day. Emmet rejoined his men, but no longer buoyed up with that hope of success which never before forsook him. "Fortune," says Lord Cloncurry, "from the outset was against him, but discouragement and fear were foreign to his nature. He now saw that any further effort on his part was useless, that there was no prospect of any success in continuing the attempt; that it was impossible to restore order, and now the excess of plunder being aggravated into useless and wanton murder, it sickened his soul, and for the first time he hesitated in his bold design, and after a short interval abandoned the undertaking as hopeless. The delay caused by the murder of Lord Kilwarden gave time for the Viceregal government to receive intelligence of how matters stood and to prepare for the assault. The gates were closed and the soldiers were drawn out in readiness for an attack. Thus, any attempt at surprise being out of the question, an advantage which the fate of the day depended on, Emmet and a few of the leaders who were around him retired from the scene in heartfelt disgust. In the midst



of this insubordination and turmoil the military ventured to make their appearance, and immediately commenced to fire upon the people, who fled in the utmost confusion and precipitancy, and in about an hour's time they swept the streets of the disordered and intoxicated rabble. At the Coombe, where Colonel Brown and the Messrs. Edmeston and Parker were killed, there had been a sharp attack made by the insurgents, and also on the Mansion House, which was taken by them and robbed of its arms; but soon these points were given up and the rout became general. Accompanied by Dowdall and Malachy, two of his faithful officers, the unhappy Emmet retired under the shades of that unfortunate night to the house of Anne Devlin, one of as patriotic and as noble of soul as ever adorned the green bosom of fair Erin (applause). This young woman was the niece of one of Ireland's boldest and most intrepid rebels, and in the service of her country she was herself no unimportant personage. When she beheld Emmet, who sought for refuge until he would be able to fly to the mountains, she cried out, "Unhappy man, you excite the people to revolt and then you abandon them:" to which he replied, "Do not reproach me, my good friend, if we have done nothing, it is their fault not mine." Though she could so severely rebuke Emmet thus, in her excitement and ignorance of the events of the day, yet, time proved that noble woman's attachment and devotedness to the young rebel, as well as her heroism and love of her country's cause (applause). There is a maxim which has gone forth almost as a universal one, which may be arrayed against Emmet, in his condemnation of attempting such a chance undertaking, which is—that, "attempts at reform when they fail, strengthen despotism; as he that struggles, tightens the cords he does not succeed in breaking." Now this not unfrequently is untrue, and in Ireland we have many examples. It has been said of her by good general as well as clever abstract reasoners, that her music never would have attained that beauty and excellence, which makes it unrivalled, were it not for the persecution of her bards; and that her faith never would have been preserved so purely and universally, only for the number of her martyrs sacrificed for it

by a cruel tyranny. May we not also say, that this has preserved the patriotism of her people and given them higher aspirations in her trampled cause : the man, whose grandfather has bled in '98, if {such there be amongst you to night, though the issue was unfortunate; though he has been picketted; though he has had on the pitch cap, or borne the torture of the triangle; and eventually, though he has died by the yeoman's bayonet, or was hung opposite his father's door, yet, fond memory looking back on the sad event, does not the life-blood, as it thrills to the inmost ventricle of the heart, throb with a more hallowed—a more devoted pulse—to the cause of your country; and, do ye not find springing up to the mind's inspiration, a greater determination to throw off the yoke of despotism, which was the cause of that atrocious wrong, perpetrated on the dearest members of your family? (applause). Emmet now fled to the fastness of the Wicklow mountains, where he was joined by a number of the conspirators, and he found the hardy mountaineers under their loved fearless chieftain, O'Dwyer, ready to put their contemplated attack on the chief towns there, into immediate execution. The young outlaw determined to prevent this attempt, which he considered as hopeless and which would involve too much blood. This, to do the young enthusiast justice, was what he abhorred; the shedding of blood he wished to avoid if possible, and it must be a sorry intellect that will not allow him this virtuous and humane quality. He "would have given it," as he said himself, (meaning the outbreak in Dublin), "the respectability of insurrection, but he did not wish uselessly to shed blood." He was but a very short time a wanderer among the hills, when he was put in a position to show to the world that he was no advocate for such wild measures, or the sacrifice of human life, where he considered the struggle hopeless and that the interest of his country was far dearer to him than fame. On the evening of the arrival in Wicklow of the conspirators of the Capital, they were joined by the mountain leaders, and a meeting was convened that night in a lonely spot in the fastness of their mountains. In this council, it was the general opinion that hostilities should be immediately carried on in the country,

and that the towns of Wicklow, Arklow, and some others, should be attacked the following day. To these propositions Emmet listened in silence, but he had determined never to give his sanction to such bold measures ; the time was past, he thought, for making a further attempt ; and renewing the struggle would not be for the benefit of his unfortunate country : therefore, when his friends had done speaking he thus addressed them :—" Our first attempt having failed, every new effort, on our part, would henceforth be useless. Our foes are armed—our friends discouraged—our only hope is in the future—let us wait it with patience. Our cause is just : and justice will triumph sooner or later. Let us not compromise it by rash undertakings. No doubt we might, in forty-eight hours, kindle the flames of rebellion all over Ireland ; but what is our object ? To free our country. I believe I serve her interests betier in refusing to raise my name on the ruins of thousands of our fellow-countrymen, thus to give tyrants a pretext for adding yet more to the weight of our chains. Should the voice of calumny, in future times, make my memory responsible for the bloodshed last night, some one, I hope, will be found to remember that it was in my power to change that revolt of a day into a rebellion, and that I refused to do so. In insurrection all depends upon the first blow ; and we have missed. Our plan was an excellent one ; it failed, owing to circumstances beyond our control, and impossible to foresee. We have now but to hide or retreat. The most profound secrecy has presided at all our plans and our acts ; our losses are considerable ; let us allow the government to relapse into false security, unacquainted with the danger that threatened it, and the extent of our resources ; some day or other, and perhaps sooner than we imagine, it will give us an opportunity of attacking it with more success. Our enterprise will not have been useless, if it has only proved to us that thousands of men may be in possession of so important a secret, without one traitor being found among them. Let me recommend you, my friends, to act in this emergency with that prudence which is requisite in men devoted to the greatest of causes—the deliverance of their country. Be circumspect, be silent, and give no grounds for suspicion to your



foes. Over my future, fate has thrown the impenetrable veil which mortal eye cannot see through. Should I succeed in evading the pursuit of my enemies, be assured that you shall see me again, one day, in arms for the cause of Ireland. While there is a Robert Emmet in existence the government will not be in safety in this country. But if it be my fate to die on the scaffold do not be daunted by my example. Let no cowards prevent you from appealing to arms, again and again, until the day when you shall have reconquered your rights and the independance of your country. Remember yourselves, and make your children remember, that, had fate been favourable to me, if I had only a few thousand men and a few days before me, I should have overturned the foundations of despotism, and given freedom to Ireland. Let us now part, gentlemen, and let each look to his own safety. I shall do the best I can to quit the country in the hope of again meeting you under happier auspices." Robert in speaking betrayed signs of great emotion, and his words deeply affected his hearers who adopted his advice ; and when he came to take his farewell of those around him, many were seen to weep, while the deep sorrow which the young patriot felt was quite apparent to all in spite of his exertions to conceal it. The meeting then began to disperse in two's and three's. Emmet's friends at their final separation pressed him to escape to the continent, and pointed out to him the immediate necessity of trying to get there ; besides, there were at the time fishing smacks in the bay, which belonged to the rebels, and one of them could convey him in a short time to the coast of France before suspicion would be awakened. This course he most peremptorily refused, he could not, he said, leave his native home, perhaps for ever, without taking his farewell of the object of his tenderest, purest passion--the girl he adored, the sun he worshipped, whose happiness was dearer to him than life, or any other sublunary consideration except that of the welfare of his country.—No ! he could not depart without seeing her again, and for this purpose he was resolved to brave the greatest danger before he fled to another land. In order to obtain this interview he came back to Dublin, and once more took up his lodgings under an assumed name, in the

house of Mrs. Palmer, Harold's Cross ; where he could secretly correspond with Miss Curran, and where he expected to see her pass on her road to and from Dublin and Rathfarnham, her father's country residence. Putting this determination into execution proved an unfortunate occurrence to poor Emmet, for he was arrested by Major Sirr, on the 25th of August, in his place of concealment, at about seven o'clock in the evening. Emmet who was at dinner when the Major entered, was warned by the grand-daughter of Mrs. Palmer, and he immediately attempted his escape by a back door, that opened into the garden, but he was seen, and one of the guards, placed to watch the house, followed by the Major's directions and arrested him, after wounding him in the shoulder by a pistol shot. When the Major came up, the prisoner was engaged in staunching his wound, and on his apologising for the rough manner with which he was obliged to treat him, he merely answered, " All is fair in war." An unfinished letter which he had been writing to the government as an inducement to them to refrain from the severity which they had adopted, lay upon a chair, and his suit of green was placed upon his bed. The noise and bustle during his capture drew a crowd about the house, through which, when brought forth by the Major and his attendants, he walked with a lofty deportment, showing no symptoms of agitation or fear, says an eye-witness, " but that calm and dignified demeanour which at all times characterised that truly great and extraordinary young man." At the Castle he was recognised by one, who had been a fellow-student at Trinity College, and now, finding any further concealment of his proper name useless, he gave it to the authorities. At this point, were there space sufficient within our prescribed limits, we would more than slightly glance upon a name, which we introduce once more, with feelings of the deepest sympathy—a name which holds a prominent place in the life and times of Robert Emmet—that of Anne Devlin (applause). It may be vaunted that real patriotism and bravery, and heroic resistance of torture, belong exclusively to the rougher sex ; but here is Irish bravery, Irish patriotism, and a bosom secret, kept beneath all the tortures that the cruelty of England could devise.—

Yes, I say, bravery, love of fatherland, heroism, and nobleness of soul, unsurpassed even in the annals of nations—and by whom? by a woman!—and by one of obscure origin and lowly birth (applause). Poor Anne Devlin, who could upbraid Emmet in the most bitter terms when she thought he had forsaken the people, could afterwards withstand the temptation of a large reward for information regarding his place of concealment, and with a look of indignation and contempt, could exclaim—“What! I accept the price of Master Robert’s blood.” She was pierced with bayonets until she was almost covered with blood—she was put to the torture, yet she cried out, “I will divulge nothing—you may murder me, but my lips are sealed.” They then half hung her, amid the merriment and savage joy of the inhuman and brutal soldiery. She was cut down when insensible and brought back in a state of unconsciousness to prison, where she was allowed to languish for some years, and when she was released from bondage, it was only to come forth as a cripple. And forty years after her young master was laid in his premature grave, we find this devoted woman living in an obscure lane in Dublin, weak and old, and in great poverty, earning a miserable pittance with the greatest difficulty and hard labour. Ireland has certainly been ungenerous to many of her great characters, not, I am sure, from a meagreness of heart, but from an apathy or want of thought which has grown upon her in the hands of the stranger (hear). Here is one of her noblest children, and a woman too, a Joan of Arc in spirit, after sacrificing everything to a noble cause, allowed to drag out her last days in squalid wretchedness and hard labour (hear, hear). We have another picture in poor Hogan, our great and unfortunate artist, who was obliged to borrow thirty sovereigns from the master of the accomplished Jemmy O’Brien—the double-dealing and perfidious Major Sirr (hear). O, Ireland! how deeply have thy chains sunk into thy heart, when thou can’st allow these things to pass to thy eternal shame; what sluggishness and apathy has come over thee, when thou art unable to raise a cenotaph to the memory of thy beloved Carolan, while you almost forget where his ashes lie, without the rudest inscription over them. Thy sister Scotland would



not act in this way ! Does she forget her Wallace or her Burns ? (hear, and applause). A short time after Robert Emmet was sent to prison he wrote to the amiable and devoted Miss Curran. The letter was to be conveyed to her by the jailor, whom he awarded all the money that still remained in his purse as a recompense for the undertaking, but instead of bringing it to Miss Curran, he conveyed it to the hands of the Attorney General. This circumstance was the means of proving, if there was any proof wanting, his nobleness and greatness of disposition. In this letter, he introduced politics as well as love, and fearing to compromise in the slightest degree one in whom his affections were centred, he chose to die without defence or exculpation, rather than that she should suffer a moment's unnecessary pain or trouble. For this purpose he wrote to the Privy Council, being aware how much they dreaded the effects of his eloquence in the dock, or on the scaffold ; and said, if they would promise to give up the letter and cause no annoyance to the young lady's family, whom he said, he had wronged, that he would not only plead guilty and make no defence at his trial, but that he would refrain from addressing the people on the scaffold ; but if they did not comply with his request, he would on the contrary, speak to the people, in his best, strongest, and most eloquent style and in the most determined manner (cheers).

But Curran, who all his life had opposed the government in the quality of an advocate or a member of the House of Commons, had the mortification, the very next day, of having his residence searched, and also of having to appear in person before the privy council, with suspicion cast upon his name. Besides, there were letters from Robert Emmet found in his daughter's room, which gave him to understand, for the first time, the true position and attachment of both. Curran was of an inflexible and haughty disposition, and these series of aggravations were too much for him ; it is said that he treated his daughter with the greatest severity, and that she soon became an outcast from his house. The Attorney General, who had to visit them in discharge of his duties, is said to have acted on that occasion more as an intercessor for

the unfortunate daughter with that stern father, than as one come to act stringently on the part of the government. With the whole of this unfortunate occurrence before the tortured mind of the young patriot, he sat down and wrote an apologetic letter to the infuriated father, taking the fault all on his own shoulders, and excusing the young girl's conduct, and pleading her innocence in the most delicate manner, which he thought might make the father relent of his harshness and cause him for the future to treat her with more kindness (loud applause).— But this, I believe, had not the desired effect, as it is asserted, she was an outcast ever after from her paternal roof, until death came to release her from her sorrows. From all we can learn of the young lady's character, she was well worthy of Robert Emmet's love; Madden says—"From all that I have been able to learn of this young lady, she was one of the gentlest, the most amiable, the simplest-minded, the freest from affectation, the most patient, the least wilful of woman kind, and yet there was no sacrifice she was not capable of making for the man she loved—there was no suffering she was not prepared to endure for his sake. Under all restraints, in all the trying circumstances she was placed in, it would seem that her fugitive, her imprisoned, her death doomed, her buried or her slandered and reprobated lover, was ever present to her thoughts. With all the resolution of strong faith, she had flung her youth, her hope, her beauty, her talent upon his bosom, weighed him against the world, which she found but a feather in the scale, and taken him as an equivalent." Previous to Emmet's trial, there was an attempt made to bribe the jailor to allow his prisoner to escape; a vessel having been put in readiness to convey him to the continent. This plan was frustrated by the jailor, after receiving part of the bribe he was to get, going to a higher authority, and informing him of the whole arrangement entered into by Emmet's friends. The day of trial was now at hand, and deep anxiety and sorrow was to be seen on many a face; but Emmet knew well that his doom was sealed at the Castle, anterior to its being pronounced before the special commission by Lord Norbury, commonly

known by the popular *soubriquet* of "the hanging judge." On the fifteenth of August, he was summoned to appear before these worthies, where he was destined to perform a miracle—that of stirring the torpid feelings of Norbury, to be ruffled for once in a long life with emotion. The other judges were Baron George, and Baron Daly. The Court-house, which was soon crowded to excess, being lined with soldiers, Robert Emmet, dressed in black, wearing a black velvet stock and Hessian boots, was brought from prison, after exchanging, as he passed out, a few parting words with his cousin St. John Mason, at the grating of his cell. Having been placed in the dock, his trial commenced about ten o'clock, but he had intimated, as he entered, to Mr. Burrowes, who was to have been his counsel, that he did not wish any one to plead in his behalf. The trial now opened by reading the indictment against one, whom it went on to say, not having any fear of God in his heart, was instigated by the devil, to traitorously conspire against such a paragon of perfection, such a humane and benevolent king and his lawful sovereign too—bless the mark! to whom he owed his love, deep veneration, and humble obedience; (like every loyal Irish subject,) disturbing the peace of his propitious reign and his happy, contented, and well governed realm (laughter). I think I have given quite enough of the sentiments conveyed in the indictment to elicit a smile from such an enlightened audience as I now have the honour to address. How much this puritanical composition reminds us of Cromwell's letter on the taking of Drogheda (hear and applause). Emmet pleaded not guilty, and then the Attorney General rose, and in a long and eloquent speech, described Emmet as being the prime mover in the rebellion, which would, if successful, bring about a cruel and unrelenting despotism; but as to its issue he had no fears, the firmness and watchfulness of government, the good discipline and bravery of their soldiery, and the loyalty of a people so ready to rise up *en masse* to crush either a foreign or domestic foe; this activity of the government and reciprocity of the people, would, he was confident, preserve the united powers a bulwark of strength against their enemies in happiness, prosperity, and independence. After



this flowery speech, which we must all look upon as Irish gospel transplanted from the Blarney Stone (laughter), the business of the court proceeded by calling the evidence against the prisoner. This dull melo-drama being gone through, Emmet refusing to call any witness or to reply to the accusations preferred against him, his counsel, Mr. M'Nally, said he supposed the trial was closed on both sides. But the bosom friend of the prisoner's brother was yet to come forward to pour his vituperation upon one of the purest souls that ever winged its flight from the grosser materials of earth to the sanctity of heaven. The Solicitor General Plunket, was yet to stand up as a prosecutor—to call upon the jury to convict him, for putting in force what he had declared, but three years and a half previous, that he would most certainly do if the Union was passed (hear). But Mr. Plunket forgot his threat, his love of liberty, and independance together (hear, hear). In his eloquent speech before the Union, he says:—“If the wanton ambition of a minister should assault the freedom of Ireland, and compel me to the alternative, I would fling the connection to the winds, and I would clasp the independance of my country to my heart. I trust the virtue and wisdom of the Irish parliament and people will prevent that dreadful alternative from arising. If it should come, be the guilt of it on the heads of those who make it necessary.” That dreadful alternative came in a short time to pass, our worthy fire-brand Plunket coolly and inactively lived it out without striking a blow, and became Solicitor General, changed his tune, and now we have the prodigy before the bar, prosecuting the brother of his college companion for carrying out his own sentiments (hear, hear). But the prisoner, putting in force these sentiments, which he had vowed openly himself to do, he said, was making an unworthy use of his great talents—it was an atrocious conspiracy, he said, “of which the person whom he was bringing home guilt to was the centre, life, blood, and soul.” The next passage of this gentleman's speech worthy of notice is this—he says:—“But were it practicable to sever that connection, to untie the links which bind us to the British constitution, and turn us adrift upon the turbulent ocean of revolution, who could answer for

the existence of this country as an independent country for a year? God and nature have made the two countries essential to each other. Let them cling to each other to the end of time; and then united affection and loyalty will be proof against the machinations of the world." This phantom idea does not rest with Plunket alone. We cannot give him the exclusive right to such a sorry misrepresentation of things as they are: unfortunately, there are many of his countrymen of the same opinion. I have met Irishmen, whom I considered enlightened, and who have expressed the same thoughts—that connection with England was absolutely necessary for the prosperity of Ireland. I was at a loss to know why? They said, our incapability of governing, our want of resources, our division, our weakness. This is all moonshine. Let us gaze around Europe, and America, and in the camp, and the government, we will find in nearly every state, Irishmen at the head of affairs—men who have signalized and raised themselves by merit alone to their elevated positions; and we might quote many foreign authors to prove the physical strength of the Irish, their endurance, their inventiveness, and intellectual quickness—can we be then such a brainless people unsuited for the arts of government or arms? Now as to the country's resources and the prosperity she would rise to, by a separation from England, it only requires us to refer to Dr. Kane's admirable work on her industrial resources. He has fully answered Bishop Berkeley's query—that if a brazen wall surrounded their island, would the Irish live and prosper? he has proved in the clearest manner that they would, and that in a country so full of wealth and the means of guarding it, its people being left to themselves, misfortune, misgovernment, oppression and poverty would fade away like a troubled dream before riches, freedom, and enlightenment. We now come to our division and our weakness, and we ask, what has caused them? The one we can account for from being long under the degrading slavery of a decimating tyranny, and the other we can trace from the artifice of a wily government, which in Ireland has left nothing to be recorded of its members by the impartial historian, but their base policy, cruelty,

fanaticism, low cunning, and unswerving brutality. But our weakness, when a flash of hope has burst over our dark cloud of sorrow has shown itself a bulwark of strength, the intonations of which were loud enough to make despots tremble, when I may say, the rising of a country and a half against enormous disciplined forces nearly overturned the British rule for ever in our fair country. Our combativeness, which many regard as a national sin, has certainly something to do with our division; but with all this faction, as a hideous nightmare, would be shaken off from our land were it not fomented and encouraged by the spoiler. He saw our weak point—he took advantage of it—and nurtured every feeling, and kindled every passion within our breasts against each other, that it was possible to draw forth, until the land from one end to the other was torn with discord by his cunning and our simplicity. Take away his domination, and disunion will fly along with it from our beautiful island home, whose verdant valleys could never again be defiled by the foot prints of slavery, and where the stranger could never more inhabit, but die, like the poisonous reptile, the moment his polluted foot touched its sacred earth. There are three sorts of men who attack and make light of this theory, and who sneer at the opinions of those who even alone imagine that it is possible we might get on as well, or even hold our place among nations if we were withdrawn from the motherly influence and protecting arm of England. These orders principally consist of—first those connected with the conqueror's government, who fatten like locusts on the plains where they raise a famine and a plague, but as we are not cannibals, when they die they are not even of such worth to us as the locusts are to the African, who makes them supply the place of the food they have demolished (applause). The next sort of men are a would-be aristocracy, who would sacrifice every honourable emotion and patriotic principle to have themselves placed side by side with the grandees of the state. To gain their society or some petty place under the government they would say, as an Irish member of parliament said in the time of Emmet when rebuked for his perfidy—"thank God that I have a country to sell." The third species are those, who, when



conquered, wish to make the best of an alien government and by submissiveness to a foreign yoke, try to make the chain of slavery sit more easy upon their galled necks. Not wishing to dwell upon former greatness or the chance expectations for the future, if they only risk their fortune or life—they banish both entirely from their view, and bring a theory of peace to their aid—a theory as rotten and baseless as it is inglorious. We will now conclude our subject for this evening, with a recollection of what Ireland was before the spoiler's hand had touched it—as such beings as I have mentioned, who barely deserve the name of men, are endeavouring to forget as being a useless and troublesome recollection. Erin from the Milesian conquest to the fatal Anglo Norman invasion, a period which takes in more than 2,400 years, held her position among the nations, and shone out a bright beacon to the world through many a dark age. At first, like other countries, she was subdivided into petty states and colonies, and dark and fabulous legends, as of all early settlers of every other part of the world are chiefly to be gleaned from the accounts of these mythic ages. But emerging from this obscure state, we find her with her chief monarch and her quick and sensitive people, noble, generous, warlike, and brave; fond of learning and its professors; fond of freedom; proud of high and noble descent, quick of insult or acts of friendship, hospitable, reckless, and daring. Thus we find her spreading her conquests over England from sea to sea, giving monarchs to Scotland, overrunning France to the foot of the Alps; and when barbarians overrun Europe, quenching the light of learning, we find her preserving it brilliant and unsullied, and we find the people of other countries coming to drink at her founts of knowledge. We find her the western emporium for arts and science, and with the knowledge of navigation, trading with the most enlightened parts of the world when England was scarcely recognised upon the maps of Europe; and also in religion we find her a bright example; even beautiful in her pagan times, her altars not stained with human blood, and while ignorant of the Great Father of all, her people did not in general stoop to idols, but worshipped Him in his most powerful apparent handy

work Baal, or the great luminary of day : and in the days of christianity, from the time it first beamed on her fair soil, we find her giving saints to every part of the world, and she can boast that in those days no Goth, no Vandal, no Hun or Roman ever conquered her ; and where did the Danes get such a signal overthrow as they did in Ireland ? She had her great lawgivers, great as those of Lacedemon or Athens, she had her militia, the finest body of men in the world, and she had her provincial kings, princes, chieftains, and nobles, all regulated by their chief monarch who lived in a spacious palace and who kept a court unequalled by his contemporaries, perhaps in the world. Erin was happy then, she was prosperous, she was powerful, but above all, she was free ! She showed herself worthy of having her own monarch, having her own laws, and ruling herself. And now, as we look back on the generations that have passed by since Ireland's captivity, can we give it a place in our minds, that the yoke of slavery, (although we have worn it for more than seven hundred years), has unfitted us for freedom ? No ! we cannot give ear to such an imputation, we were never thoroughly conquered, we never became a Saxon race like the English—we retained our love of freedom—the hope of regaining it, and we retained our religion, our manners, our customs, and our language ; and as long as a people retain these essentials to nationality—these badges of their descent, they are not, they cannot be, an entirely conquered people. The Irish are a royal people, the descendants of kings, and jealous of their genealogies : they have preserved them pure amidst all political storms even down to the present. Then ye O'Neill's, O'Donnell's, O'Malley's, O'Byrne's, M'Carthy's, M'Cabe's, M'Kee's, (cheers) ; all ye, who can trace your pedigree up to royalty, to monarchs who laid the power of France at their feet, who made the progenitors of your task masters fawn and crouch beneath their power, will you, I say, receive this flimsy doctrine that Erin is no longer capable of ruling herself ? There may be some of you who will accept it. Yes, many. But the royal blood of Milesius descends still unsullied in the veins of many of you, and will through your descendants—your line still prove themselves to be warriors, who have not tarnished the bravery of

their race ; and oh ! may a day come, is my fervent hope, my prayer, when as powerful nobles in the land, your line will carry down the name, bright as in ancient Erin, to far off generations in regenerated Ireland !

“ O Erin ! the muses thy bright hills among,  
 Fix'd their throne, when the Grecian in learning  
     was young,  
 When nations now rampant in power were unknown,  
 The deeds of a long polished race were thine own ;  
 And when Rome in her cradle no strain could prolong,  
 Thy bards gave the world the refinement of song ;  
 And to thee, in her gifts to the nations, heaven  
     gave  
 The heart of the noble—the hand of the brave !

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### THIRD LECTURE.

On Tuesday evening, 23rd Nov., the third and concluding lecture on “ The Life and Times of Robert Emmet ” was delivered in the Mayoralty Room, by Geo. H. Kirk, Esq. The attendance was even larger than at either of the previous lectures, every seat being occupied. On Mr. Kirk's qualifications as a lecturer we need not dwell, as it would be simply to repeat what has already appeared in our columns—not for the first, nor the second time. Into these lectures, as we anticipated he would, Mr. Kirk put his whole soul. His extensive reading, vivid imagery, and strong love of country have been strikingly displayed in these lectures. The entrance into the lecture-room of the Rev. Mr. M'Kee, Rev. J. K. Markey, and other clergymen was hailed with bursts of applause. Mr. Kirk, we need scarcely say, also received an enthusiastic reception, together with other principal parties amongst the auditory. The very crowded state of the room made it difficult to give a numerous list of those present, but amongst the auditory we observed:—Very Rev. Mr. Hanrahan, O.S.A.; Rev. J. K. Markey, P.P., Clogher; Rev. Thomas Gavin, C.C., St. Mary's, Drogheda; Rev. J. Gallogly, C.C., Tullyallen; Rev. Mr. Glynn, O.S.A.; Rev. Mr. Mathews, C.C., Dro-



misikin ; Rev. Mr. O'Byrne, O.S.A. ; Rev. Mr. Cooney, O.S.F. ; Rev. Brother Larkin, Superior C.B. ; Rev. Brothers O'Donnell and O'Malley ; J. A. Flanagan, T.C. ; Nicholas Leech, T.C. ; Mrs. Leech ; Thomas Daly, West-street ; Mrs. Daly ; Patrick M. Brady, T.C. ; R. J. Kelly, M.D. ; Patrick Byrne, H.C., West-street ; Mrs. Byrne ; Richard Kirk, Newgrange ; the Misses Kirk ; T. Carpenter, junior ; the Misses Carpenter ; Thomas Connolly, builder ; Mrs. Connolly ; John Costello, *Drogheda Argus* ; Peter O'Neill, Secretary S.P.C. ; John Reilly, Clerk of Union ; Patrick Reilly, Shop-street ; John Nolan, Patrick Rice, Sunday-gate ; J. Mangan, &c., &c.

The band of the society, which has been lately re-organised—we hope not to be dis-banded as heretofore—played before and after the lecture, under the able direction of Mr. Rothe, with commendable proficiency, considering the short time they have been in practice.

At eight o'clock, the chair was taken by the spiritual director of the society,

The Rev. H. M'KEE.

The Chairman in brief and appropriate terms introduced the lecturer.

Mr Kirk then came forward to the rostrum and was received with loud cheers. He said :—

When we consider the history of vanquished nations, we cannot but contemplate the struggles and downfall of their patriots. We find in these countries often, that their people are endued with love of liberty, love of home, devotion, sincerity, and endurance, and many other good qualities, essential to true patriotism. Take for instance Ireland and Poland. There we have two pictures of devotedness and courage, combatting against corruption, bribery, sordidness and greed of gain—intellect and energy—ardour and genius—arrayed against cool calculating cunning and the faculty of distinguishing with unerring sagacity, real interest, and the base quality of sacrificing to it every generous emotion of the heart. Such have been the distinguishing features of Ireland and Poland : such the qualities of their arbiters, England and Russia. It may be unpleasant to dwell upon, but such is the fact—England possesses the key of Ire-

land's fetters, that rust round her festering ancles—  
Russia has her iron heel upon Poland, endeavouring  
to press out every noble feeling or emotion, and  
while in this position :—

“ Poland is dead,  
The tyrant said.”

But the patriot starts up to prove—

“ She but sleeps,  
While her genius keeps  
A watch for her waking hour.”

With all her terrors, “The gallant Pole but waits  
the chance to break the Russian chain.”  
And Erin, in that beautiful metaphorical  
language of Curran's :—“ An emerald set in the  
ring of the sea,” have her patriots not risen too ?  
Yes, they have tugged at her chains, until they have  
startled old Britannia from her dream of security.  
But still their patriots fall, and again those two  
nations seem to fall back into that dull dark trance  
of slavery : the noblest of the human race die for  
them, and they live on, in that seemingly, endless,  
loathsome captivity. Such is the decree of fate,  
and we cannot quarrel with it—there is some wise  
purpose hidden beneath this great mystery. A  
great earthly authority has said, “ Whatever is, is  
right,” and in the failure of these just causes,  
perhaps we may have what ought to be. If Hugh;  
or Owen Roe O'Neill succeeded, we might never  
have heard of Wolfe Tone—his grandeur of soul  
might never have been brought forth. If Wolfe  
Tone was fortunate, Emmet never would have  
shone out as a beacon star to his countrymen ; so  
with Ireland, if she had ever continued prosperous,  
she might not have known the worth of freedom ;  
and like all great nations that have risen to great  
power and opulence, spreading their conquests  
east and west, and when risen to the full zenith of  
power, as surely falling away into insignificance ;  
so she might be crumbling now, beneath the over-  
powering weight of her numerous possessions, not,  
as we hope and augur her destiny will be—the  
realization of Saint Bridget's vision—the original of  
Moore's picture. Yes, my country :—

"The nations have fallen and thou still art young,  
 Thy sun is but rising, when others are set ;  
 And tho' slavery's cloud o'er thy morning hath  
     hung,  
 The full noon of freedom shall beam round thee  
     yet,  
 Erin ! Oh Erin ! tho' long in the shade,  
 Thy star will shine out, when the proudest shall  
     fade."

In the downfall of Empires we must regard their patriots, we must recognise them, as " belonging to a race of popular heroes, the *elite* of mankind ;" and looking upon them as such, it is natural we should be anxious to trace their attempts from the causes to the effects—to investigate their actions and scrutinize their worth. There are many rise up with the pretensions of being patriots, who delude their countrymen into the belief that they are "really such ; and often it is only Time, that through her penetrating microscope, (when their deeds have had their effect and gone down to posterity), can reveal that ambition or greed of gain, alone propelled them to such actions. There are others in the midst of their career are recognised as not wholly devoted to the cause of the people (hear, hear). Then from such beings as these, it is the duty of the historian to separate the true disciples of liberty, " the *elite* of mankind." These are the men alone to hold up to the public gaze, as demi-gods—the benefactors of the human race—at whose shrines they are to drink in that true spirit of patriotism, that must one day overturn despotism. And if they have fallen martyrs to that liberty they worshipped while, like guardian angels, endeavouring to protect the weak against the strong ; if their large hearts have bled their last drop in the cause of oppressed suffering, and their eyes have closed forever, even on a darker and more appalling scene than that which they first opened upon, our first impression would be, that it would be better for their country if they never had lived—that their object was a good one ; that their intentions were good if they were feasible—that of the liberating of slaves and the downfall of despotism, but they failed, and failure generally brings disgrace, and now their country



feels their folly—the scourge was upon it, but now they have doubled the stripes—they have plunged it into a deeper bondage, which it is now more difficult to break than ever. Such would be our first impression, but let us pause and take a retrospective view of the history of patriotism, and we will find that the martyrs of liberty never die in vain, their blood fertilizes patriotism, its germs are nurtured and strengthened by its influence, and the more the one flows the stronger the other grows and flourishes, until one day the crop is reaped in abundance and the profit exceeds the outlay. As to the fall of patriot martyrs tightening the chain of slavery more firmly round a vanquished nation's neck, we have only to look upon our own fair country to refute this hypothesis. Look upon her before the year 'Ninety-eight, and look at the same country in forty years after (hear, hear). See her in the dark night of bondage when the Fitzgeralds, the Tones, and the Emmets rose up; and when they had revived nationality and fed the flickering flame of freedom, and renewed the spirit of patriotism by their martyrdom, see her struggling on, galled and oppressed after their fall, destined to all appearance never more to rise up from misery, even with a feeble and a trembling voice to assert her rights—withdraw your gaze from her; and forty years after glance upon the despoiled one and in amazement you will behold from the darkness a bright light advancing, the precursor of the sun of freedom. Another day comes, and another set of men arise as true as the former, and they too pass away and the gloom returns: but the light comes again in the east, and forty years from hence it may not be the herald of the sun of liberty, but that bright luminary itself that will be beaming in all its noon-day splendour over the tearful, the trembling, and the long ill-treated Erin (hear, hear). The position of the true patriot is no enviable situation with regard to earthly considerations. It is in the heart and conscience he must seek for repayment and consolation, to heaven he must look for reward suitable to his undertaking or adequate to his views. It is not to the cheer of a crowd, or the pageant of a victorious entry to a palace, or the ovation of a battle field that can repay him for his undertakings. No! he

must reflect on that warrior, Alexander IV, who on entering a captured town amid the shouts of the populace, saw the people, who were going to burn his effigy on a gibbet, turn to make him a monument. Turning to his son with a smile he said, "Behold what popularity is worth—the small difference between a gibbet and a statue." No! it is to the heart alone he must look for recompense, his inward monitor alone can give him a gift equal to his deserts. When conscience tells him he has acted the part of a man, a hero, a philanthropist, a benefactor of mankind, there is his meed! Then the true patriot must be blessed with an intellect that can soar above public opinion, sordidness, or misfortune; a virtue, that can resist the attractions or allurements of fortune, and a mind that can leave personal considerations behind in the general good. If we look for the reward of the highest rank of patriotism among men in general, we will be miserably mistaken: persecution or slander await it, corruption opposes it, false friends or lukewarm followers forsake it. But though this is the case, are the rights of man not to be asserted till men grow wiser or better: are there to be no heralds to liberty? no landmarks to point out the way to salvation? If venality and treachery thwart and oppose him, must the patriot halt in his mid-career?—must defections from the ranks discourage him from continuing in his design? It was not thus that the liberators of oppressed nations have ever acted; if they had done so, they never would have won the independence of their native homes (hear, hear). There never were leaders started up to assert their country's just rights, the precursors of freedom, but had to struggle against similar baseness, but a great soul will soar over such difficulties, the true patriot will uphold the cause he defends, should he stand alone in the contest. Judge Johnson has truly written that, "It is the history of patriotism when it passes the level of ordinary intelligence to draw down on itself the vengeance of the power it has provoked, and to be feebly supported by timid friends. Persecuted on one side, abandoned on the other, genius rises alone like the ruins of Palmyra in the desert, and borrows I know not what of solemnity from the desolation which surrounds it. Ought,

then, no resistance to be made to tyranny till men shall have learned to know and defend their rights? Will they ever learn except from some messenger of the truth who teaches them the way of salvation by his martyrdom? 'Tis not in vain that Providence has implanted in the heart of man, the instinct of resistance to oppression." We must now return to Plunket's speech where we left off the last evening, where the hypocrite exhorted the prisoner to employ the time he still had left in warning his deluded countrymen of his errors: he says:—"It is not for me to say, what were the limits of the mercy of God, what a sincere repentance of those crimes might effect; but I do say, that if this unfortunate young gentleman retained any of the seeds of humanity in his heart, or possessed any of those qualities which a virtuous education in a liberal seminary must have planted in his bosom, he will make an atonement to his God and his country, by employing whatever time remains to him in warning his deluded countrymen from persevering in their schemes." Mr. Plunket finishes up by calling "devoutly on God to confound and overwhelm" that which he declared before parliament a few short years before, that he was determined to put in force, but which he now stigmatized as "atrocious, wicked, and abominable." At the conclusion of the Solicitor-general's speech, the jury were charged by the accomplished *man of hanging*, Judge Norbury, whose speech, Madden tells us, was as free from rancour as any speech of his could be in such a case. When he concluded, the jury without leaving the box pronounced the prisoner guilty. Mr. M'Nally then on the part of Emmet, prayed that judgment might be deferred until the next day, which request the Attorney-general said could not be complied with. In the usual way the prisoner was then asked by the Clerk of the Crown,—“What he had to say, why the sentence of death and execution should not be pronounced against him according to law.” Emmet's reply to this, from its grandeur, manliness, and extreme beauty, I will read for you in its entirety. The young patriot, now on the brink of the grave, but still neither unnerved or humbled, came forward to the front of the dock, and before the bench commenced thus:—"My



lords, as to why judgment of death and execution should not be passed upon me, according to law, I have nothing to say; but as to why my character should not be relieved from the imputations and calumnies thrown out against it, I have much to say. I do not imagine that your lordships will give credit to what I am going to utter; I have no hopes that I can anchor my character in the breast of this court; I only wish your lordships may suffer it to float down your memories until it has found some more hospitable harbour to shelter it from the storms with which it is at present buffeted. I am arraigned here as being engaged in a conspiracy against the English Government in Ireland: I avow it, I am a conspirator. For that I am to undergo the penalty of the law, and to answer for my intentions before God. I am ready to do the one and the other. Was I to suffer only death after being adjudged guilty, I should bow in silence to the fate that awaits me; but the sentence of the law which delivers over my body to the executioner consigns my character to obloquy. A man in my situation has not only to encounter the difficulties of fortune, but also the difficulties of prejudice; when fortune abandons him and gives him into the hands of his enemies, his character is immediately attacked by calumny. For in this case, my lords, there must needs be a crime and a criminal; between you and me posterity will one day decide. The man dies, but his memory lives. That mine may not perish, that it may live in the respect of my countrymen, I seize upon this opportunity to vindicate myself from some of the charges alleged against me. I am charged with being an emissary of France. It is false. I did not wish to deliver up my country to a foreign power, and least of all to France. Never did I entertain the remotest idea of establishing French power in Ireland. According to the paragraph with which the address of the Provisional Government begins, it is evident that every danger attached to an effort of our own for independence was deemed preferable to the still more fatal danger of introducing a French army into Ireland; and here I shall remark upon a singular error in the argument of the Attorney-general. The proof, he says, that we counted upon the assistance of the French is, that

the plan of conspiracy was formed before their arrival. This argument clearly proves the contrary. Small indeed, would be our claim to patriotism and sense, and palpable our affectation of the love of liberty, if we were to sell our country to a people who are not only slaves themselves but the unprincipled and abandoned instruments of imposing slavery on others. Look what the conduct of France has been in Switzerland, in Holland, and in Italy. Could we hope for better in our own case? We wanted to deliver our country into the hands of France! And for what reason? To change our masters? Had we entertained such ideas, how could we have dared to speak of giving liberty to our fellow-countrymen? How could we have had such a high motive? Every such conclusion, from whatsoever portion of the proclamation of the Provisional Government it may be drawn, is a calumny on our designs; there is not a single fact to justify it. Read the proclamation. Where is there a question of French aid? Is it on that passage where the people of Ireland are called on to show the world that they are worthy of resuming their place among the nations? That they have a right to be recognised as an independent people by the one manifest proof which can be given, by throwing off with their own hands the yoke of England? Had not the conspiracy been organised eight months before the commencement of hostilities? It is said we intended delivering our country up to France. The statement is made with no other proofs than the assertion. Our declaration and our acts are evidence against our accusation. Connection with France, was indeed, intended, but only as far as mutual interest would sanction or require. It is not only to-day that I have discovered by what bonds states are united. We know full well that union exists only by reason of their interests, and if that interest should change, it is not written articles that can protect the weaker state and insure its independence. Therefore the intention of the Provisional Government has never been to conclude a permanent alliance with France; for we well know that treaties are soon regarded as null, and are violated on the slightest pretext whenever mutual interest has ceased to exist. It is true that there have been

negotiations with France. This day there is at Paris, my lords, an agent of the United Irishmen who negotiates with the French Government to obtain sufficient aid to accomplish the separation of Ireland and Great Britain—aid for which the preliminary condition will be a guarantee for Ireland like that which Franklin obtained for America. Of the success of this negotiation England shall one day be the judge. Were the French to come as invaders or enemies, uninvited by the wishes of the people, I should oppose them to the utmost of my strength. Yes! my countrymen, I would advise you to meet them on the beach with a sword in one hand and a torch in the other (cheers). I would meet them with all the destructive fury of war. I would animate my countrymen to immolate them in their boats before they had contaminated the soil of my country. If they succeeded in landing, and if forced to retire before superior discipline, I would dispute every inch of ground, burn every blade of grass, and the last entrenchment of liberty should be my grave. What I could not do myself, if I should fall, I should leave as a last charge to my countrymen to accomplish; because I should feel conscious that life, any more than death, is unprofitable when a foreign nation holds my country in subjection. My lords, it may be part of the system of angry justice to bow a man's mind by humiliation to meet the ignominy of the scaffold; but worse to me than the scaffold's shame or the scaffold's terrors, would be the imputation of having been the agent of the despotism and ambition of France; and whilst I have breath I will call upon my countrymen not to believe me guilty of so foul a crime against their liberties and against their happiness. My object and that of the rest of the Provisional Government was to effect a total separation between Great Britain and Ireland." (Here the prisoner was interrupted. Lord Norbury imperiously commanded him to be silent and to listen to the sentence of the law.) "I have understood that judges sometimes think it their duty to hear with patience and speak with humanity, to exhort the victim of the laws, and to offer with tender benignity their opinions of the motives by which he was actuated in the crime of which he was adjudged guilty. That a



judge has thought it his duty so to have done, I have no doubt ; but where is the boasted freedom of your institutions—where is the vaunted impartiality, clemency, and mildness of your courts of justice, if an unfortunate prisoner whom your policy, and not justice, is about to deliver into the hands of the executioner, is not suffered to explain his motives, sincerely and truly, to vindicate the principles by which he was actuated ? You my lord are the judge—I am the supposed culprit. By a revolution of power we might change places, though we never could change characters. If I stand at the bar of this court, and dare not vindicate my character, how dare you calumniate it ? Does the sentence of death which your unhallowed policy inflicts on my body, condemn my tongue to silence and my reputation to reproach ? Your executioner may abridge the period of my existence ; but while I exist I shall not forbear to vindicate my character and motives from your aspersions ; and as a man to whom fame is dearer than life, I will make the last use of that life in doing justice to that reputation which is to live after me, and which is the only legacy I can leave to those I honour and love, and for whom I am proud to perish. As men, my lords, we must appear on the great day at one common Tribunal ; and it will then remain for the Searcher of all hearts to show a collective universe who was engaged in the most virtuous actions or attached by the purest motives—my country's oppressors or"—(At these words there was some agitation in the court, and the prisoner was again commanded to be silent). "My Lords, will a dying man be denied the privilege of exculpating himself in the eyes of the community of an undeserved reproach, thrown upon him during his trial, by charging him with ambition, and attempting to cast away, for a paltry consideration, the liberties of his country ? Why did your lordships insult me ? Or, rather, why insult justice, in demanding of me why sentence of death should not be pronounced against me ? I know, my lords, that form prescribes that you should ask the question—the form also presents the right of answering. This, no doubt, may be dispensed with, and so might the whole ceremony of the trial, since sen-

tence was already pronounced at the Castle before the jury were empannelled. Your lordships are but the Priests of the Oracle, and I insist on the whole of the forms." (Here Emmet paused, until the court desired him to proceed). "Well, then, for all those treasons what motive is alleged? Ambition! Had I been ambitious, my fellow-citizens, it would have been easy enough for me, with my education, my fortune, the rank and consideration of my family, to seat myself, one day, among the haughtiest of your oppressors. But what I have toiled for was to destroy that Government which rules by impiety against the Most High; which treats his hapless people like locusts of the forest; which makes man hunt down his brother, and strike him to the earth if he believes a little more or less than the creed of the Government; which reigns in the midst of the tears of the widows and the orphans it has made." (Violent murmurs here made the voice of the accused inaudible for some time). "When my spirit shall have joined these legions of martyred heroes who have shed their blood on the scaffold, and in the field, in defence of their country, this is my hope: that my name and memory may serve to animate those who survive me (cheers). I have had no other aim but that of delivering my country from the inhuman oppression which she has too long and too patiently endured; and I have confidence, chimerical as this noble enterprise may appear, that there is yet in Ireland enough of union and strength" (cheers). (A new interruption rendered his voice inaudible). "If I speak thus, it is not to give myself the puerile satisfaction of causing you an instant of vexation. What I have said was not intended for your lordships, whose position rather inspires me with pity than envy; my explanations are for my fellow-citizens. If there be a true Irishman here let my last words console him in the hour of affliction. I have been charged with such importance as to be considered the key-stone of the combination of Irishmen or, as it has been expressed, the life and blood of this conspiracy. You do me honour over much; you have given to the subaltern all the credit of the superior (applause). There are men concerned in this conspiracy who are not only superior to me, but even to your own conceptions of yourselves, my lord—men

before the splendour of whose genius and virtues I should bow with respectful deference, and who would not deign to call you friend, who would not disgrace themselves by shaking your blood-stained hands." (Here Emmet was interrupted by Lord Norbury). He then continued—"What, my lord! shall you tell me that I am accountable for all the blood that has and will be shed in this struggle of the oppressed against the oppressor? Shall you tell me this, and must I be such a slave as not to cast back the accusation on you, my lord, who, were all the innocent blood you have shed in Ireland collected into one grand reservoir, your lordship might swim in it." (At these words the court interfered to silence the prisoner, and Lord Norbury appeared agitated.) Robert Emmet resumed—"I do not fear to approach the Omnipotent Judge to answer for the conduct of my short life, and am I to be appalled by a mere remnant of mortality here? Let no man dare, when I am dead, to charge me with dishonour; let no man attain my memory by believing that I could have engaged in any cause but that of my country's liberty and independence (cheers). I would not have submitted to a foreign oppressor for the same reason that I would resist a domestic oppressor (hear). France, even when our enemy, could not be a more implacable one than the enemy we have in the heart of this country (applause). . . . Lord Norbury interrupted him, saying—"Mr. Emmet, you have been called upon to show cause, if any you have, why the judgment of the law should not be enforced against you. Instead of showing anything in point of law why judgment should not pass, you have proceeded in a manner most unbecoming a man in your situation; you have avowed and endeavoured to vindicate principles totally subversive of the tranquility, well-being, and happiness of that country which gave you birth; and you have broached treason most abominable. You, sir, had the honour to be a gentleman by birth, and your father filled a respectable situation under the Government. You had an elder brother, whom death snatched away, and who, when living, was one of the greatest ornaments of the bar. The laws of the country were the study of his youth, and the study of his maturer life was to cultivate and support them. He left you a noble example to follow,



and if he had lived he would have given your talents the same direction as his own, and have taught you to admire and preserve the constitution for the destruction of which you have conspired with the most profligate and abandoned, and associated yourself with hostlers, butchers, and such persons, whom you invited to council when you erected your Provisional Government. . . . . When at night you came out, heading a band of assassins, and joining in their atrocities, you must have lost all sentiment of what you were." Emmet having thanked the judge for his compliments addressed to his family, continued thus—"If the spirits of the illustrious dead participate in the concerns of those who were dear to them in this transitory life, I supplicate my father to look down on his suffering son, and see has he for one moment deviated from those moral and patriotic principles which he so early instilled into his youthful mind, and for which he has now to offer up his life. My lords, it is not my intention to go beyond the bounds of moderation, and I pray you to stop me if I pass them; but you must comprehend that it is impossible for me to defend myself without saying some things which are disagreeable for you to hear." Lord Norbury—"Mr. Emmet, you are too well acquainted with the laws not to understand that it is impossible for me to permit you to employ a dangerous and perverse eloquence attacking the very principles of the government to which you owe obedience." Robert Emmet—"My Lord."—Lord Norbury—"If you have anything to say on the point of law, you may speak; if not, I cannot allow you. What you have already said confirms and justifies the verdict of the jury." Robert Emmet—"Then I shall be silent. My justification rests upon abstract principles and the application of them. I would have developed both the one and the other. I was wrong, no doubt, in reckoning on the liberty of defence in this country. But I would descend to the tomb with a heavy weight upon my heart if it could be believed that I have acted with a view to my personal interest or ambition. I adjure all those who have heard the Attorney-general to banish from their minds so false an imputation. My Lord, you are impatient for the sacrifice. The blood which you seek is not congealed by the

artificial terrors which surround your victim ; it circulates warmly and unruffled through its channels, and in a little time will cry to heaven—be yet patient ! I have but a few words more to say.—I am going to my cold and silent grave ; my lamp of life is nearly extinguished ; I have parted with everything that was dear to me in this life for my country's cause, with the idol of my soul, the object of my affections. My race is run ; the grave opens to receive me and I sink into its bosom. I have but one request to make at my departure from this world, it is the charity of its silence. Let no man write my epitaph ; for as no man, who knows my motives, dare now vindicate them, let no prejudice or ignorance asperse them. Let my memory be left in oblivion, and my tomb remain uninscribed, until other times and other men can do justice to my character. When my country takes her place among the nations of the earth, then, and not till then, let my epitaph be written. I have done." (Loud applause). After Emmet's address, little remained to finish up the day's proceedings. Lord Norbury passed the sentence of death and execution, which was to be put in force on the following day. Throughout his address, it is said, he evinced frequent signs of emotion, which were never shown by that iron judge on any preceding occasion. The trial having lasted until ten o'clock at night the prisoner was then conducted from the dock of the court house to a condemned cell of the prison of Newgate, where he was heavily ironed by Gregg the unfeeling jailor. But even there, their unfortunate prey was not left in peace, to prepare for eternity during the few hours he had to live. The government—for conscience makes cowards, and guilt brings its own accustomed fears—afraid of an attempt being made to rescue their prisoner, the Secretary at the Castle, after midnight, sent an order to have him removed to Kilmainham Jail, which lay two miles and a half distant. As hypocrisy could not but mingle with all their undertakings, whether bad or good, these fears were represented as only an anxiety for poor Emmet's greater comfort. Again this unfortunate being was given into the charge of its jailor, George Dunn, who, it is said, was moved to tears when he beheld the noble youth in chains, and the blood upon

his garments, which oozed from wounds occasioned by them. He then gave the prisoner some food, which he required very much, as he had been on his legs in the court house for nearly eleven hours, besides the time that had since elapsed, and during that time he had not tasted food. Fatigue, youth, and above all, a free conscience, combined to give him that repose which he required, and he soon slept soundly in spite of all the terrors of death which awaited him on the following day—the sacrifice, which would alone satisfy an unprincipled government. On the morning which ushered in the day of Emmet's execution, he was found by M'Nally, the barrister—who was considered the most trustworthy friend of the insurgent leaders, but who has lately been discovered to be a doubled dyed traitor in the pay of the government—engaged with the ordinary of Newgate, the Rev. Dr. Gamble, in preparing to meet his Maker. Robert's first question on M'Nally's entrance, was how his mother was, whom he knew had been fast breaking down under the heavy weight of sorrow. The query being unanswered he repeated it. The barrister then said, "I know, Robert, you would like to see your mother." To which he replied, "Oh, what would I not give to see her." To which M'Nally answered, as he pointed towards heaven, "Then, Robert, you will see her this day." The affectionate son, struggling with the most poignant feelings at the death of an affectionate parent, stood silent and motionless for a few minutes, but recollecting that a few short hours and he would meet her beyond the vale of tears, where the tyrant holds no dominion, he said, "It is better so." The remainder of the forenoon was spent in writing letters, the last of which was addressed to Miss Curran's brother. This letter, written an hour before his execution, in a steady, bold, and regular hand, an evidence of his strength of nerve and mind, shows at once the firmness and softness of his nature. It seems Mr. Richard Curran had sent word or written to Emmet that he pardoned him for what had occurred, and this is Robert's reply :—

MY DEAREST RICHARD—I find I have but a few hours to live ; but if it was the last moment, and that the power of utterance was leaving me, I would thank you from the bottom of my heart for your



generous expressions of affection and forgiveness to me. If there was any one in the world to whose breast my death might be supposed not to stifle every spark of resentment it might be you, and I have deeply injured you; I have injured the happiness of a sister that you love, and who was formed to give happiness to every one about her, instead of having her own mind a prey to affliction. Oh! Richard, I have no excuse to offer, but that I meant the reverse; I intended as much happiness for Sarah as the most ardent lover could have given her. I never did tell you how much I idolized her. It was not with a wild or unfounded passion, but it was an attachment increasing every hour, from my admiration of the purity of her mind, and respect for her talents. I did dwell in secret upon the prospect of our union. I did hope that success, while it afforded the opportunity of our union, might be the means of confirming an attachment which misfortune had called forth. I did not look to honours—praise I would have asked from the lips of no man, but I would have wished to read in the glow of Sarah's countenance that her husband was respected. My love, Sarah! it was not thus I thought to have requited your affection; I did hope to be a prop round which your affections might have clung, and which would never have been shaken; but a rude blast has snapped it, and they have fallen over a grave. This is no time for affliction. I have had public motives to sustain my mind, and I have not suffered it to sink; but there have been moments in my imprisonment when my mind was so sunk by grief on her account that death would have been a refuge. God bless you, my dearest Richard. I am obliged to leave off immediately.

ROBERT EMMET.

When the sheriff's men came to conduct Emmet from his cell, he asked two requests, one was to allow him as much as possible the use of his arms; the other boon he did not hope would be acceded to; however, he said, he had asked it in order to show to the world that even to the last he gloried in the cause which he was about to suffer for. This favour which was sought but to be refused, was that he would be allowed to appear on the scaffold, in his green uniform, the dress of the rebel army of his lost country. At half past one o'clock, a

mournful procession was seen slowly moving from Kilmainham to Thomas-street, the appointed place of execution, government thinking, I suppose, the place where the conspiracy was hatched was the most proper place for the prisoner to make a final atonement for the crime. So thought the government, but Emmet's ideas were different. He felt "a just pride in dying for a good cause" in which there could be no crime that required expiation. In front of the procession Emmet was borne in a carriage, and large troops of military, both infantry and cavalry, followed close behind. "The melancholy cortege," says Madden, "might have been mistaken for a military funeral, and the young man at the window, who occasionally recognised a friend in the crowd, or stationed at a window, for some one connected with the person whose obsequies were about to be performed." Yet with all this appearance of calm indifference or exemption from fear, there was nothing of ostentation or affectation in his demeanour either on the scaffold or on his way thither. His deportment was dignified, and there was a serenity—a firmness—and even a cheerfulness about his countenance, that showed the strong impression he was under—that of dying for a just and holy cause (hear, hear). Convenient to the Royal Hospital, which stands not far from the jail, a carriage was to be seen on the morning of the execution, and in it sat a young lady, her handkerchief pressed to her face. As the procession passed close to the vehicle which contained her, she stood up, waved her handkerchief, and sunk back overpowered on her seat. The prisoner rose up, gazed at her intently, and then was observed to wave his hand towards her until she vanished entirely from his view. This lady it is thought was Miss Curran. On Emmet's alighting at the temporary scaffold, though his arms were tied, he ascended the ladder with an agile step, and reached a platform raised only five or six feet from the ground: a few yards from the scaffold stood a few of Robert's personal friends and college companions, and around it was collected a vast crowd, all eager to catch the last speech of the dying patriot. But in this they were doomed to disappointment; his eloquent tongue like his brave heart



had finished its political career—his thoughts were raised to a better world, where he expected to meet a more favourable judgment—and the few words it gave utterance to came like from a spirit already celestial:—"My friends, I die in peace, and with sentiments of love and charity towards all men." This brief address was pronounced in a clear, firm voice, which his college friend thought not the least altered from what it had been, when often its sweet ringing accents thrilled his inmost soul upon a different theatre. After giving his watch to the executioner, and shaking hands with a few persons around him, he helped to adjust the rope about his neck, and in a few seconds one of the brightest of mankind in talent and virtue was launched into eternity—that soul, that could not brook the chain of an earthly tyrant, winged its flight heavenward through the freedom of endless space. Death had snatched his prey, and the earth had lost one of its brightest ornaments in the gifted, the brave, the good, and youthful martyr—his country's most illustrious son. The body being after the usual time cut down, his head was severed from the trunk, and exhibited to the multitude by the "finisher of the law," as he cried out, "behold the head of a traitor, Robert Emmet," to which the only dissent the crowd could give was returned—a universal, deep, and prolonged silence. O heaven! while saints could have wept and angels blushed at the unhallowed deed, and the fiendish expression, the vilest worms of earth gloated over the revolting exhibition of their own villainy—so blinded is weak human nature warped into viciousness. Upon the head being exhibited to the multitude, it is said that no distortion was discernable in the features—there was a serenity, and a sweet changeless repose in the expression that was remarkable and extraordinary after such a terrible death. This placid appearance of the face was so perfect that it seemed to indicate the composure, to the last, of that pure and highly-gifted mind which once reigned within, but which now had fled its citadel for ever. What a striking contrast was that sweet face in death, to those of some of the living, near it, disfigured as they were by the rage of animal ferocity. The blood of the murdered had run from the scaffold on to the pavement, where the



dogs were seen to lap it up, until the soldiers of a brave Highland regiment, who guarded the spot, were made acquainted with the circumstance. But the blood of this victim of tyranny was not all lost or swallowed up by the dogs or the earth. Many were the persons who lingered about the place, and whenever an opportunity presented itself by the sentries turning their backs, some one of them was seen cautiously approaching and hastily dipping his handkerchief in the blood, and immediately placing it in his bosom. Thus it was preserved by his countrymen next their hearts, as an amulet, capable of working some extraordinary charm. This relic, they were conscious, was one of the sweetest and fairest upon earth, and the most precious in the sight of heaven—the blood of the martyr—yes, the martyr, for he who sacrifices his life for the good and happiness of mankind, sacrifices it to the King of the Celestial Paradise—the great Authority from whence it sprung (applause). The remains of Emmet being brought from the scaffold to the jail, a strict injunction was given, that if not at once claimed by his friends, they were to be hastily consigned to the earth in “Bully’s Acre,” a place which in ancient times had been the burial place of distinguished chiefs and warriors of his country; but now a place selected for interring paupers and executed criminals. The body was deposited in this burial ground, in a grave beside that of Felix Bourke, (another of Ireland’s illustrious rebels), as no one came forward to claim it. The reason of this was, Emmet’s friends were nearly all in prison, and his acquaintances or associates were afraid to come forward, as they thought it would implicate them in the eyes of the government and bring down the vengeance which was certain and speedy ruin. But with all this cause of fear, the body was translated in a very short time afterwards to St. Michan’s churchyard, the burial place of the Sheares’, and there re-interred with the greatest privacy (hear, hear.) In this place, (though there is some difference of opinion as to its certainty) without almost a doubt, lie the remains of all that was mortal of one of the brightest ornaments of his age; the high-souled, pure-minded, unselfish Robert Emmet; who, though a young and ardent enthusiast, yet had met in him, some of the finest

and rarest qualities which are found perhaps but once in an age to be concentrated in the same being : beside his virtues or his talents, his affable and engaging deportment, procured for him wherever he went, friends and admirers while he was living, and now that he was gone, his heroic and dignified conduct and magnanimity in death, drew down the sympathy of persons even in the opposing ranks, and wrung an expression of sorrow or regret from men of all parties. The loss of that grand intellect—a bright glowing sun not slowly retired to the horizon—by degrees going down and fading imperceptibly from the view, but swept from the zenith in its noon-day splendour, and hurled behind the hills of time, while even not a satellite star succeeded to throw its reflected light on the impenetrable gloom that its loss occasioned. This exalted intellect was rudely swept away when it had risen to its full height and power, when his countrymen were in the most need of such a guiding light, and therefore the public calamity such a loss occasioned was felt the more deeply by his afflicted and unfortunate country. Over the grave of this bright son of Ireland, shortly after his re-interment was laid horizontally a very large stone, upon which not a word was inscribed—those that loved and honoured him done as he bade—his last wish was strictly adhered to. And still the wandering patriot as he comes to lean and ponder over this tomb, where the genius of Erin seems to keep watch, he beholds the slab yet blank, the name unwritten there except in thought, and alone traceable by the foreshadowings of fancy or the cheering eye of hope :—

Oh ! breathe not his name, let it sleep in the shade,  
Where cold and unhonour'd his relics are laid ;  
Sad, silent, and dark be the tears that we shed,  
As the night dew that falls on the grass o'er his head.

But the night dew that falls though in silence it weeps,  
Shall brighten with verdure the grave where he sleeps,  
And the tear that we shed, though in secret it rolls,  
Shall long keep his memory green in our souls.



Having now concluded the bright, brief, and eventful career of Robert Emmet, we cannot conclude without gazing once more upon the object of his love, that gentle and innocent being, the unfortunate Sarah Curran, who in the words of the Countess De Haussonville, "in the hearts of the Irish people was the widow of a hero who died for their country and the object of their silent adoration." Having eluded the vigilance of her friends, the unhappy girl stole out after nightfall, a day or two after the execution, and visited the tomb of her murdered lover. Oh ! what feeling, what anguish was in that breaking heart—what indescribable pain pierced the bosom of that high-spirited and devoted woman as she knelt beside that rude and nameless grave, while the skies seemed to weep their soft dewy tears, as if in very pity over the victims sacrificed to early love and undying liberty. And as she clasped her fair hands, and raised her deep blue streaming eyes to heaven, as if seeking that comfort from above which was denied her on earth, while her agonized soul was rent and torn with the convulsions of inconsolable grief, we can fancy her in that silent attitude, in that lone and deserted churchyard, breathing her wild lament over her hero-lover's grave :—

The joy of life lies here,  
Robert aroon ;

All that my soul held dear,  
Robert aroon.

Spouse of my heart ! this shrine—  
"The long lost home" of thine,  
Hope's, freedom's, love's, and mine !  
Robert aroon.

But tears must fall unseen,  
Robert aroon ;

The turf is not yet green,  
Robert aroon.

No stone must bear thy name,  
No lips thy truth proclaim,  
The heart must shroud thy fame,  
Robert aroon.

No minstrel's strains for thee,  
Robert aroon ;

The harp must silent be,  
Robert aroon.



It must not breathe one moan,  
 Of pride or praise, not one,  
 Its strings have lost their tone,  
 Robert aroon.

The night is cold and chill,  
 Robert aroon ;  
 My heart is colder still,  
 Robert aroon.

But sun will never shine,  
 Can warm this heart of mine ;  
 It's almost cold as thine,  
 Robert aroon.

Still would I linger here ;  
 Robert aroon ;  
 What home have I elsewhere ?  
 Robert aroon.

Ah ! were I laid with thee,  
 How welcome death would be  
 A bridal bed to me !  
 Robert aroon.

My heart had but one hope,  
 Robert aroon ;  
 It only bloomed to droop,  
 Robert aroon.

It never can bloom more ;  
 The blight has reached its core,  
 And all life's joys are o'er,  
 Robert aroon.

A very short time elapsed after the tragical fate of her noble and intrepid lover, when the poor young creature left her paternal roof, from which she now became an outcast for ever ; having been abandoned by an angry father, she sought for more sweetened looks and softer words of consolation in the house of a Mr. Penrose, a Quaker, who it is said was involved in the affairs of 'Ninety-eight, and who considered it about that period convenient to leave the country for some time. This gentleman's residence was in the County Cork, and thither Miss Curran, accompanied by her sister, went to seek an asylum with his family, who received her into their bosom with melancholy pleasure, and tried in every way possible to alleviate her sorrows—but all was vain ! grief had sunk too deep in her soul, and began

soon to make its effects visible upon her health as well as upon her spirits. A circumstance, which partakes of the hue of romance, that happened during her stay at this gentleman's residence, shows her utter dejection, silent affliction, and deep solitude even in the midst of society. At a party given in the house of her kind benefactor, "in a moment of unconsciousness, she quitted the gay circle, and seating herself at the foot of the staircase began, evidently unaware of what was passing around her, to sing a plaintive melody that had reference to her own unhappy circumstances; she had an exquisite voice, and the sad tone in which she sang, soon drew around her a crowd of sympathising listeners." This touching circumstance is beautifully and feelingly described by the exquisite pen of Washington Irving. He relates the scene, but incorrectly, as having occurred at a masquerade ball in the Rotunda, instead of taking place at a party in the south of Ireland; but his description of Sarah Curran, in the *broken heart*, is too beautiful and pathetic to be omitted. "She loved him with the disinterested fervour of a woman's first and early love. When every worldly maxim arrayed itself against him; when blasted in fortune, and disgrace and danger darkened around his name, she loved him the more ardently for his very sufferings (hear, hear). If then his fate could awaken the sympathy even of foes, what must have been the agony of her, whose whole soul was occupied by his image? Let those tell who have had the portals of the tomb suddenly closed between them and the being they most loved on earth—who have sat at its threshold, as one shut out in the cold and lonely world, whence all that was most lovely and loving had departed. But, then, the horrors of such a grave! so frightful, so dishonoured! there was nothing for memory to dwell on that could soothe the pang of separation—none of those tender though melancholy circumstances which endear the parting scene—nothing to melt sorrow into those blessed tears, sent like the dews of heaven to revive the heart in the parting hour of anguish. To render her widowed situation more desolate, she had incurred her father's displeasure by her unfortunate attachment, and was an exile from the paternal roof. But could the sympathy and kind offices of



friends have reached a spirit so shocked and driven in by horror, she would have experienced no want of consolation; for the Irish are proverbially a people of quick and generous sensibilities. The most delicate and cherishing attentions were paid to her by families of wealth and distinction. She was led into society, and they tried by all kind of occupation and amusement to dissipate her grief, and wean her from the tragical story of her love. But it was all in vain. There are some strokes of calamity which scathe and scorch the soul—which penetrate to the vital seat of happiness—and blast it, never again to put forth bud or blossom. She never objected to frequent the haunts of pleasure, but was as much alone there as in the depths of solitude; walking about in a sad reverie, apparently unconscious of the world around. She carried with her an inward woe that mocked at all the blandishments of friendship, and heeded not the song of the charmer, charm he ever so wisely! The person who told me her story had seen her at a masquerade. There can be no exhibition of far gone wretchedness more striking and painful, than to meet it in such a scene. To find it wandering like a spectre, lonely and joyless, where all around is gay—to see it dressed out in the trappings of mirth, and looking so wan and woe begone, as if it had tried in vain to cheat the poor heart into a momentary forgetfulness of sorrow. After strolling through the splendid rooms and giddy crowd with an air of utter abstraction, she sat herself down on the steps of the orchestra, and looking about for some time with a vacant air, that showed her insensibility to the garish scene, she began with the capriciousness of a sickly heart to warble a little plaintive air. She had an exquisite voice; but on this occasion it was so simple, so touching, it breathed forth such a soul of wretchedness, that she drew a crowd mute and silent around her, and melted every one into tears." What a sad picture of human woes—what a melancholy scene was this—the worst of wretchedness encircled by gaiety and dressed in the livery of joy. But there was one amongst the bright circle who listened intently to the unhappy girl's warblings, whose feelings rose high above the rest—the young girl had charmed his soul, and he determined



to seek her hand, that his kind and delicate nature might at least soften the pangs of her widowed heart (hear, hear). This young man, who was endowed with many attractions both personal and mental, after some months most untiring attention gained the hand of Miss Curran. The homeless outcast of a father's house, thrown among strangers, depending on acquaintances for kindness, and on the liberality of friends for support, became, at last, the wife of Major Sturgeon. "I give you my hand," she said, "but I cannot give you my heart, I have none to offer." But the gallant Major sought but the one, alone, he knew the other was long since entombed in the grave of her early lover. The prospect of leaving Ireland was another inducement besides gaining a protector in this marriage. She longed to leave the scenes of her girlish days, her happiness, her early love, and her misfortunes—any land was now preferable to that: her future husband was about to leave, for he was going to join his regiment at Malta. The nuptials being celebrated, which seemed more a bond of friendship than a marriage—a covenant made between sympathy and wretchedness, more than a union of hearts—a disinterested being becoming a husband in order to become a protector, and another becoming a wife, to recompense kindness, and to flee from scenes and associations the dearest though the most painful. While the memory of her beloved Robert was not forgotten (hear, hear). "Its claim," says Madden, "was recognised and acknowledged by the friend and protector who had assumed a husband's title, to prove the generosity and benevolence of his nature, in his care and protection of one who was worthy of so much pity as well as admiration." She started with her husband for Italy, but with health broken down, and symptoms of decline already upon her. Admiral Napier, who knew her there, speaks of her as "the walking statue." All the care or kindness of her attentive protector could not drive away the incubus that pressed upon her lonely heart. The residence in a fair southern climate brought about no better results :—

"She is far from the land where her young hero sleeps,

And lovers are round her sighing :  
 But coldly she turns from their gaze, and weeps,  
 For her heart in his grave is lying !

She sings the wild song of her dear native plains,  
 Every note which he lov'd awaking—  
 Ah ! little they think, who delight in her strains,  
 How the heart of the minstrel is breaking !

He had liv'd for his love, for his country he died,  
 They were all that to life had entwin'd him—  
 Nor soon shall the tears of his country be dried,  
 Nor long will his love stay behind him !

Oh ! make her a grave, where the sunbeams rest,  
 When they promise a glorious morrow ;  
 They'll shine o'er her sleep, like a smile from the  
 West,  
 From her own loved island of sorrow !

In the sunny South, a few months after her arrival,  
 far away from friends or relatives, and the loved  
 land of her young patriot martyr, and the home of  
 her youth, the young, the amiable, the interesting  
 Miss Curran died of a broken heart. Her sad and  
 eventful career being closed, that husband who  
 showed such unvarying kindness up to the end, now  
 hastened to obey her last request, which was to  
 convey her to a last resting place in her native land.  
 And now like her noble lover, she is but ashes  
 mingled with Irish earth—without a monument to  
 mark the spot—like him the object of her affections,  
 she lies in an unknown, nameless, and neglected  
 grave—but what matter :—

“ Her sorrows are numbered—no longer she weeps,  
 Every pang she endured is requited ;  
 With endless delight, and in silence she sleeps,  
 For in death with her love she's united.

Like Sidney he died, but his memory shall live,  
 In the bosoms of those who deplored him,  
 And Pity her purest of dew-drops shall give,  
 To the sorrows of those who adored him.

For he loved—was beloved ! but, alas ; in his bloom,  
 The ordeal of fate here sore tried him ;  
 And his spirit took flight from the world of gloom,  
 To that glory that here was denied him.

From the regions of bliss—the high heaven above—  
 Where sorrows can never invade him,  
 He saw her distress and he beckoned his love  
 To ascend and with joy she obeyed him.

And she who is joined to the spirit she mourned,  
 Now in bliss, 'tis in vain to deplore her ;  
 For her mem'ry shall live in their bosoms inurned,  
 Who vowed even in death to adore her.

Whether hero, or lover, or else, matters not,  
 Other times—other men will divine him ;  
 Let him rest with his love by the world forgot,  
 We have hearts large enough to enshrine him."

And thus we close the saddened scene, over the sorrows of devoted love, and the sacrifice of the brightest ornaments of society driven to rebellion by the baseness of an unprincipled government :—

"Rebellion ! foul, dishonouring word,  
 Whose wrongful blight so oft has stained  
 The holiest cause that tongue or sword  
 Of mortal ever lost or gained.  
 How many a spirit born to bless,  
 Has sunk beneath that withering name,  
 Whom but a day's, an hour's success,  
 Had wafted to eternal fame."

(Applause). I have now closed the eventful record of him, whose remembrance is cherished in the Irish heart in a way in which that of no other man has ever been. His memory is green in the Irish soul, and as fresh as the day when both the old and the young stole to the spot where his murdered corse had been lately taken from, there, unperceived by the guards, to dip their handkerchiefs in his blood, to be placed hastily next their heart as relics to be treasured there for ever. Sixty-six years have passed by since his young life was offered up for Ireland, yet his memory is as fervently and reverentially cherished, and his principles as proudly perpetuated, as ever they were, since his lifeless form was borne secretly to its last resting place, beneath the blank slab, where yet is to be inscribed the unwritten epitaph (applause). His history is one which awakens an interest in the Irish heart above all others—not that Ireland has



been meagre in her patriots or her martyrs to the cause of liberty, even when the gibbet was the insignia of England's justice, the jailer the exponent of Britain's mildest sway, and the grim headsman her high priest of liberty (hear, hear.) Ireland can recount a long list of names of brave men who have laid down their lives in the cause; perhaps she is as prolific, for her extent, as any country in the world, in patriots and martyrs, who have suffered and shed their blood in her cause; but, from amongst them all, Emmet stands out pre-eminent—stands out with such a halo of romance about him; so youthful, so guileless, so enthusiastic, so brave; with such rare qualities of head and heart, with such high hopes and deep affections, with such simplicity of nature, joined to such rare and natural transcendent endowment; while the stormy history of his political life, the touching story of his love, and the recollection of his melancholy and tragic fate, awaken emotions and touch chords in the Irish heart that only the history of Emmet can awaken. He is the Wallace of Ireland, and of all who have fought and bled for her—like the hero of Scotland in his native land—none has thrown such an air of romance over his history, none has been endowed with such rare and varied qualities, none have been so sweetly enshrined in the lucid amber of Ireland's memory, for none have ever had such extensive claims upon her sympathies (applause). Poland had her Kosciusko, Switzerland her Tell, Genoa her Andrew Doria, Greece her Leonidas, Rome her Cincinnatus, the Tyrol its Hofer, Scotland her Wallace, and the two great divisions of the New World their Bolivar and their Washington; but of all this bright array of names of heroic men, all of whom have risked, and some of whom have lost everything for the love of their native land, there is none comes forth, robed in such a witching mantle of romance, none whose affecting story thrills the human heart with such loveable emotion, while it awakens an interest in the history of patriotism—an interest peculiarly, absolutely his own. None are so fondly, so tenderly remembered, and his affecting tale, which has been so often wept over by the maid and the mother, the schoolboy and the warrior, has been faithfully recorded in prose, while the profound emotions of reverence for his

memory have been embalmed by his friend and schoolfellow, "the sweetest lyrist of Erin's saddest wrongs," in the choicest snatches of poetry, allied to some of the sweetest strains of his native land, the most beautiful and soulthrilling music in the world. While prose and verse have wafted his fame and his memory to the farthest limits of the earth, from the inhospitable shores of Labrador, to the rich praries of Bolivia, or the fertile savannahs of Uruguay ; from the golden fields of California or New Zealand, to the fair Eblana, where he offered up a holocaust to liberty—wherever an Irishman is to be found—no other memory is so fondly cherished, no other name so often remembered (hear, and applause.) As we stand by the graves of heroes and of martyrs, as we droop over the tombs of patriots, to ponder over the actions and the history of the tenants who lie in dreamless slumber beneath our feet, there is none calls forth such sweet and tender associations, none that brings forth such hallowed memories, that awakens such melancholy and deep interest, and that claims so strongly our sympathies, as that of Robert Emmet—the unpretending grave, recognised by its modest blank slab, on which remains to be inscribed the yet unwritten epitaph ! (Applause).

## I.

"Pray, tell me," I said to an old man who stray'd,  
Drooping over the graves which his own hand hath  
made,

"Pray, tell me the name of the tenant who sleeps  
Beneath yonder lone stone, where the sad willow  
weeps ?

Every stone is engraved with the name of the dead,  
But yon blank slab declares not whose spirit is  
fled."

## II.

In silence he bowed, then he beckoned me nigh,  
Till we stood o'er the grave—then he said with a  
sigh :

"Yes, they dare not to trace e'en a word on that  
stone,

To the memory of him who sleeps coldly and lone ;  
He told them—commanded—the lines o'er his  
grave

Should never be traced by the hand of a slave !

## III.

“ He bade them to shade e’en his name in the  
gloom,  
Till the morning of freedom should dawn on his  
tomb ;  
‘ When the flag of my country for liberty flies,  
Then, then let my name and my monument rise !’  
You see they obeyed him—’tis sixty-six years,  
And they come still to moisten his grave with their  
tears.

## IV.

“ He was young, like yourself, and aspired to o’er-  
throw  
The tyrant, who filled his loved island with woe ;  
They crushed his bold spirit—this earth was con-  
fined,  
Too scant for the range of his luminous mind.”  
He paused, and the old man went slowly away,  
And I felt as he left me an impulse to pray.  
Grant heaven ! I may see, ere my own days are  
done,  
A monument rise o’er my country’s great son,  
And, oh ! proudest task, be it mine to indite,  
The long delay’d tribute a freeman must write ;  
Till then shall its theme in my heart deeply dwell,  
So, peace to thy slumber, dear shade, fare thee well.  
(Loud applause).

At the close of the lecture

The Rev Mr Glynn on rising to propose the vote of  
thanks was received with loud and prolonged cheers.  
He said, it afforded him great pleasure to propose the  
resolution, that the marked thanks of St Peter’s Young  
Men’s Society and of that meeting, were justly due and  
thereby given to G H Kirk, Esq, for the very interest-  
ing course of lectures concluded on that evening (loud  
applause). As he (Rev Mr Glynn) entered the room  
that evening, the resolution was handed to him, and he  
was asked to propose it. That duty he readily under-  
took, having been a delighted listener to the series of  
lectures so admirably brought to a close that evening.  
But he should say, that had he known that so many rev  
gentlemen, better qualified than he was to address them  
would be present, he would have had the resolution  
committed into better hands. The duty that devolved on  
him, was however, a light one in this respect ; it was  
one that needed no persuasive force to gain it at their  
hands, the heartiest reception (loud cheers). He might



well say that the resolution was a true bill, because he felt that he only expressed in the plainest terms, their sentiments when he said that they were grateful to Mr Kirk for his highly eloquent, learned, and instructive lectures (loud cheers). Mr Kirk is an able lecturer (applause). He had listened to the three lectures and he must say that Mr Kirk had delighted and instructed his audience (loud cheers). Ireland has had her long years of blood and tears. Her martyrs were numberless; aye, they might be counted by millions. From her martyrology Mr Kirk had selected one bright and enduring name—the highly gifted, brave, disinterested, high soul'd Robert Emmet (great cheering). Mr Kirk's object was to instruct the young men of Drogheda, and he did not know any subject that could do that better, that could teach the lesson of devotion to their native land, sacrifice for their country, singleness of purpose, high and ennobling sentiments, above all selfish aim, than that set forth, in glowing eloquence, in these lectures on the life and times of Robert Emmet (loud and prolonged cheers). Who was Robert Emmet? Emmet was a young man well born, a young man of genius, a young man endowed with extraordinary talents, a young man who could have attained to any position that an alien government could confer upon him. But Emmet refused all; he spurned every advance made to him; he said so long as the heel of oppression crushed his native land, he would never disgrace himself by taking any position that that Government could bestow (loud cheers). Mr Kirk deserved any thanks they could offer him; his lecture had imbued the young men of Drogheda with patriotism, fired them with its an ennobling spirit, taught them that any sacrifices they could make for country should be readily made for it, and that their native land, should be next to religion the dearest object of their hearts (tremendous cheering). When the young men of Ireland shall have those principles engraven on their hearts, then, indeed, the unwritten tomb of Emmet will not long remain uninscribed (loud cheers). It was not an easy thing called on unexpectedly as he was to propose a vote of thanks that would fully meet the occasion. He had, however, done his best (loud cheers). In conclusion it gave him great pleasure to propose the vote of thanks so richly due. The Reverend gentleman resumed his seat amidst cheers, again and again repeated.

Mr Peter Johnson, Secretary to the Society, in suitable terms, seconded the vote of thanks.

The Chairman who was greeted with rounds of applause, said it afforded him very great pleasure to put the resolution from the chair. After the eloquent man-

nor in which it had been proposed by his esteemed friend Father Glynn and seconded by Mr Johnson, it would be useless for him to detain them, or add any thing to what had been so well said. He had only to repeat that the society owed lasting gratitude to Mr Kirk for his instructive series of lectures (cheers). He was sure they were all proud of him as an Irishman and a native of Drogheda (cheers). He need only put the vote of thanks to the meeting which he was sure they would cordially endorse (loud applause). It would not be very long he trusted until they would again be favoured by a lecture from Mr Kirk (cheers).

Mr Kirk who was again received with applause, in acknowledging the vote of thanks, said that he had only to return his heartfelt acknowledgments for that very flattering resolution to the enlightened audience, to Father M'Kee who had so well filled his position, to the reverend gentleman, Father Glynn and also Mr Johnson who had so ably and eloquently proposed that over flattering resolution. He felt that he should not have such encomiums passed on him; he felt that he did not merit them. He had also to return his sincere thanks to some reverend gentlemen and other parties who had come a very long distance to hear him (applause). He would treasure up the fond remembrance of that evening as of the other evenings when they had cheered him on in the labour of love which he had to the best of his ability performed (applause). These were pleasing incidents to be treasured up in the future. But while tendering them his heartfelt acknowledgments there was one thing he would wish to speak about, if he had not already taxed their patience too much (no, no, go on): He wished to speak of the reasons that influenced him in the choice of a subject. He had read the history of his country, in the ancient annal and in the modern compilation: but whosoever the author or whatsoever the form, there could be traced one invariably policy of injustice that marked English rule in this country. There was an incident connected with his own family history, arising out of this same policy of oppression and illustrating it, which had impressed itself strongly on his mind. One of his ancestors, dispossessed of his property, was obliged to seek the shelter of a fisherman's hut at Ologher Head, and while his son who had been driven from a comfortable home, was returning from the market of Drogheda he was shot down, outside Laurence's Gate, by a drunken soldier, for the amusement of his brutal companions (sensation). Circumstances like to that impress themselves on the mind and cannot be forgotten. Though, however they could not forget, they could forgive (loud applause).



Was it because an ancestor of his had been shot down in other days, that he was to seek vengeance on the descendant of him who shot him? No: they should forgive all, and be ready even to grasp the hand of the ancient foeman for the sake of their native land (loud applause): In the words of Banim—

The old man who stood at the altar  
His enemy's hand to take,  
And at first his weak voice did falter,  
And his feeble hand did shake.

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And then crying tears like a woman,  
'Your hand' he said 'aye, that hand,  
And I do forgive you foeman,  
For sake of our bleeding land' (cheers).

Why he had chosen Robert Emmet as his subject more particularly was, because one of Emmet's guiding principle was that the only hope for the salvation of Ireland was in the union of Irishmen of all creeds and parties (applause). Emmet, although a revolutionist, was not a man of blood. It suited the purpose of certain writers to seek to cast obliquity on that high spirit as a visionary and rash enthusiast. Emmet reckoned that there were 100,000 Irishmen in the army and navy, and he argued that a victory once gained, the Irish soldiers would fraternise with the people. These facts should in fairness be stated when it was sought by unmeasured obliquity to dim the laurels wreathed round his immortal brow (applause). Looking at that history of the past, the boasted constitution was a tissue of falsehood and humbug, a repetition of shooting down or starving the people. Even coming down to a very recent period, in their own day they had two millions, at least, of the Irish race done for, either slain at home, or taking refuge in a foreign land. Not many years ago the country was favoured by a visit from a British statesman, Earl Russell, better known as Lord John the Boy (laughter). He came during these days of depopulation and had the temerity to insult the country by drinking prosperity to Ireland. He drank the toast, however, in a very appropriate place—the Devil's Glen (laughter). They would recollect the words of Earl Russell; in 1860 he said that every nation misgoverned and persecuted has a right to throw off the detested yoke (applause). That was Earl Russell's teaching, and was exactly Emmet's doctrine. These were the sentiments he died for (cheers) and the government that shed that young martyr's



blood has since, from the forum, sent forth these sentiments as immortal truths (applause). But there has been a reservation ; they are truths for other nations, but not for Ireland. So far as the past, they might say of their boasted constitution that its freedom was a sham, its justice a theory, and its love of Ireland the greatest farce of all (cheers). But a new era is about to dawn which has been ushered in by the levelling of a dominant church, which although called a sentimental grievance would yet tend to effect a union amongst all Irishmen (applause). Next, they were to have a good land bill. As a tenant farmer he said that fixity of tenure was their sheet anchor (hear, and cheers). Mr Gladstone says he will give a good bill ; there was one thing, however, in which he had falsified his words—he had failed to govern Ireland according to Irish ideas. In conclusion he thanked the audience for the very kind way in which they had received him. He did not take it as due or paid to himself, but attribute it to this—that he had brought before them a truly national subject (applause). But taking it so, he was not the less pleased the less grateful, for it showed that Irish patriotism is not dead, and that Drogheda patriotism still pulsates strongly. Mr Kirk retired amidst loud plaudits.

The chairman desired to make one brief remark. As the name of Earl Russell had been introduced, he would remind them that Earl Russell was in power in '64, and they all knew how he acted when, to test his sincerity, he was asked to apply his principles to Ireland. He then referred to the manner in which the jury panel was dealt with at the Cork special commission as an illustration of what may take place under constitutional government.

The audience then separated.

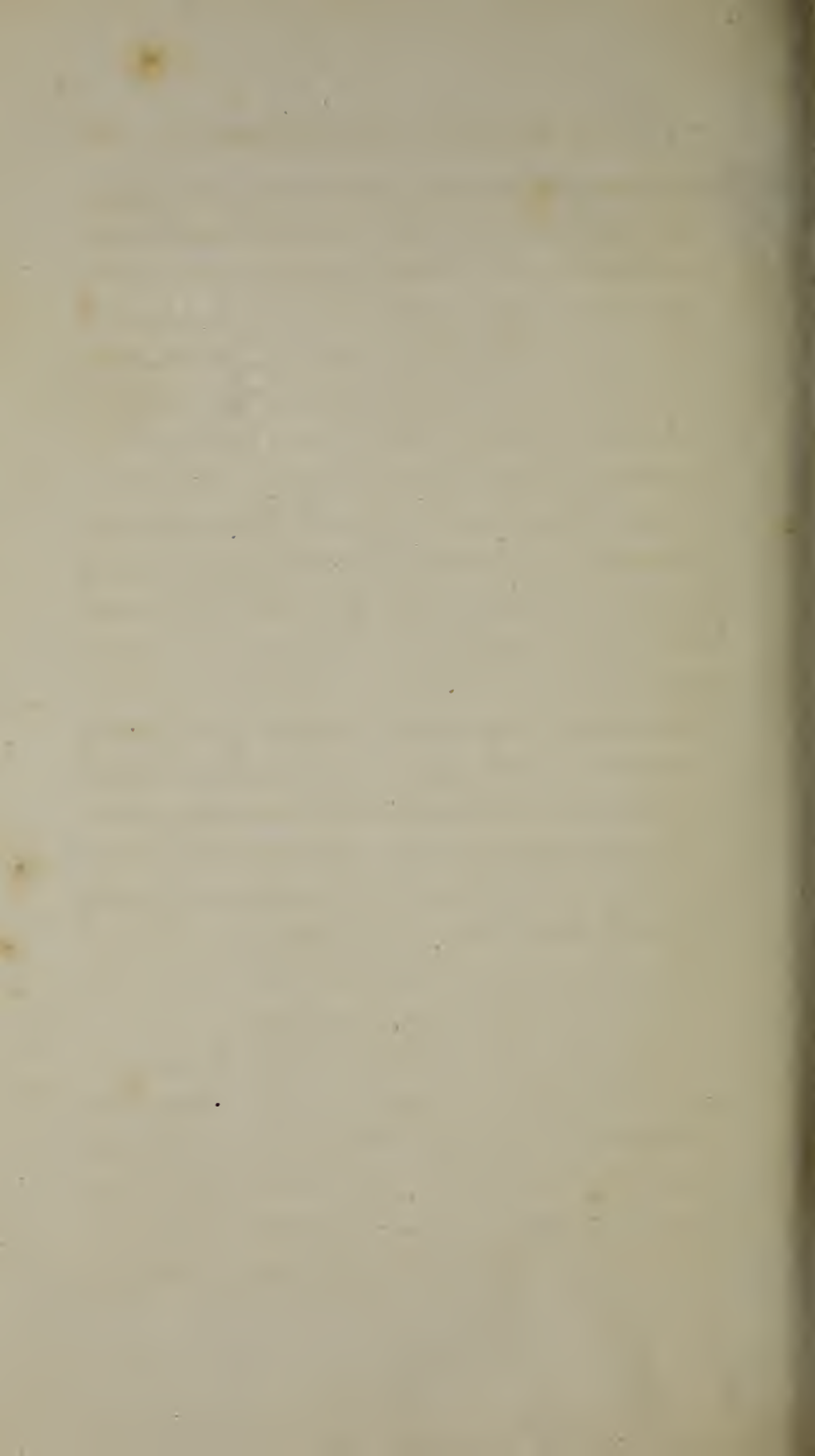






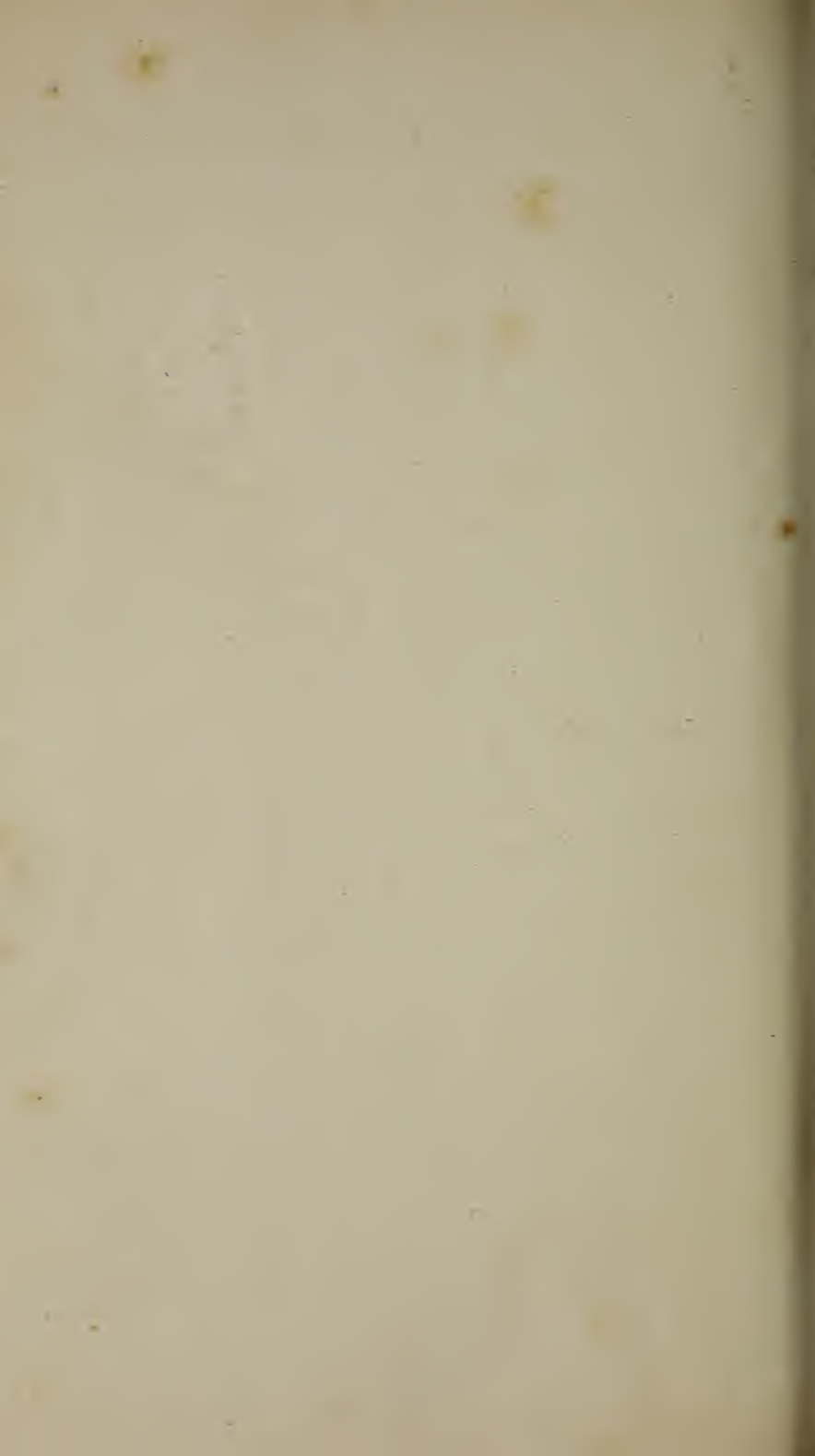
















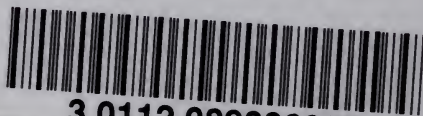




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Life and times of Robert Emmet : a lectu



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